The Winds of God

by Louis Albert Banks

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THE WINDS OF GOD

By Louis Albert Banks

Christ and His Friends
The Fisherman and His Friends
Paul and His Friends
John and His Friends
David and His Friends
Anecdotes and Morals
Poetry and Morals
A Year's Prayer-Meeting Talks
On the Trail of Moses
The Winds of God
The Unexpected Christ
Twentieth Century Knighthood
Windows for Sermons
The Christian Gentleman
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Hero Tales from Sacred Story
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Ammunition for Final Drive on Booze
Sermons Which Have Won Souls
Spurgeon's Illustrative Anecdotes
The Problems of Youth
The World's Childhood
The Sinner and His Friends
The Sunday Evening Evangel

THE WINDS OF GOD

BY

The Rev. Louis Albert Banks, D.D.

Author of "Christ and His Friends," "The Problems of Youth," "Sermons Which Have Won Souls," Etc.

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DEDICATED
WITH LOVING GRATITUDE TO
MY FRIEND
MRS. JOHN C. AIKEN

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THE WINDS OF GOD

THE EAST WIND—THE WIND THAT DRIVES THE SOUL TO GOD

"An east wind shall come, the breath of Jehovah coming up from the wilderness."—Hosea 13:15.

THIS striking passage of Scripture illustrates the immanence of God in human life. The tribe of Ephraim was strong. When he spoke, all the tribes about trembled. No other tribe had such a reputation for strength and power. He was fruitful among his brethren. So far as human sources of strength were concerned, he was not only the leader, but gave every promise of continuing in leadership. And yet the prophet declares that an east wind shall come and blow on Ephraim, and as a result of it his springs of power and joy shall be exhausted and all his fountains of resource shall be dried up. And the prophet emphasizes

the fact that this is not merely a chance, unlucky wind that blows on Ephraim—it is a part of that divine Providence which watches over and works in the world to reveal to men their own weakness and demonstrate to them that their true strength is in God. These people had become proud of their own strength. They did not know God any longer. They thought it was their own wisdom, their own cunning, their own might which made them great, and so the prophet declares that a breath of Jehovah shall come in the form of an east wind and dry up their fountains of influence and pride and make them to know that men are strong only in God.

There never was an age when men needed to have that emphasized more than in this day, when men put God far away from them through theories of evolution and interpretations of life that are likely to hide God and make him seem afar off. But God has not forsaken his world and the noblest science finds God as immanent as any scholarship of the olden time. William Herbert Carruth, one of our own American scholars, makes this very clear in a remarkable poem:

"A fire-mist and a planet,
A crystal and a cell,
A jelly-fish and a saurian,
And caves where cave men dwell.
Then a sense of Love and Duty
And a face turned from the clod,
Some call it Evolution
And others—call it God.

"A haze on the far horizon,
An infinite tender sky,
Ripe rich tints of cornfields
And wild geese sailing high;
And all over upland and lowland
Charm of goldenrod,
Some of us call it Autumn,
And others say it is God.

"The echo of ancient chanting,
The gleam of altar flames;
The stones of a hundred temples
Graven with sacred names;
Man's patient quest for the Secret
In soul, in star, in sod;
Some deem it superstition,
And others believe it is God.

"A picket frozen on duty,
A mother starved for her brood,
Socrates drinking the hemlock,
And Jesus on the Rood;
The millions who, humble and nameless,
The straight hard path have trod—
Some call it consecration,
And others feel it is God.

"Like the tides on the crescent sea-beach,
When the moon is new and thin,
Into our hearts high yearnings
Come welling and surging in—
They come from the mystic ocean
Whose rim no foot has trod—
Some of us call it longing,
We know that it is God."

God often uses the east wind in his Word as an illustration of his active providence in interfering with the proud and wicked dealings of men. Sometimes it is used to show how God breaks up men's plans, overwhelming them in disaster. You may find a case like that in the twenty-seventh chapter of Ezekiel, where the prophet takes up the word of God in lamentation over the city of Tyre, which was to be destroyed. It was a wonderful city, perfect in beauty, with its borders in the heart of the seas. The great forests of Lebanon and Bashan had furnished cedar and oak, and the isles of the sea had furnished ivory, and Egypt had poured its treasures, to make Tyre the commercial glory of its time. But the prophet sees that, in spite of all the forces working together to make it a great market for horses, mules, goats, wheat, honey, oil, jewels, wine,

wool, and precious cloths, so that it excelled all the other markets of mankind in its day, still an east wind will come, and in his vision he exclaims: "The east wind hath broken thee in the heart of the seas." And he saw the ruin of Tyre because, tho the east wind blew upon them, in their rebellion they refused to be driven to wisdom and reverence and worship.

Again we see the same illustration used to show how God sometimes dries up the sources of a man's or a people's prosperity, seeking thus to bring them to himself. In the nineteenth chapter of Ezekiel the prophet is commanded to take up lamentation for the princes of Israel. And he meditates on the fact that their mother was like a vine planted by the waters. The vine was fruitful and full of branches, and it had strong rods for the sceptres of them that bare rule, but because of their sins and wickedness, God sent an east wind that dried up its fruits and its strong rods were broken down and consumed.

In that remarkable dream of Pharaoh, where he saw seven ears come up upon one stalk, full and good; and afterward he saw seven ears withered, thin, and blasted with the east wind

which sprung up after them, and devoured the good ears, we have another illustration of how God uses the east wind as a figure to show his constant presence in the world to overcome evil and bring about righteousness and to further his purposes among men.

We may trace the east wind in the lives of men. Take the case of Joseph. When his brethren came down into Egypt after corn, and he revealed himself to them, and they were overwhelmed with shame, Joseph showed his understanding of what the east wind meant when he said to them: "As for you, ye meant evil against me, but God meant it for good." These words spoken by Joseph to his repentant brethren reveal his faith in and knowledge of the God who had been with him in the days of his distress and throughout all his path as a slave in prison, and on to the office of prime minister of Egypt. Joseph understood that to the man who trusts God his winds of providence are always effectual. "Ye meant evil," said Joseph, "but God meant good." Someone has said that God keeps no sharp instruments in his treasury, so he has to employ others—sometimes even Satan himself—for doing

the necessary pruning upon his people. Isaiah says, "In that day shall the Lord shave with a razor that is hired," and the king of Assyria was God's "hired razor," which he used as an east wind to carry out his purposes. Satan was permitted to use his fullest resources against Job, and the east wind blew on Job, destroying his houses and herds and wiping out his wealth, and, most terrible of all, destroying his children and his health; but it only served to bring Job into a clearer vision of God and to far greater prosperity and blessing. The result was that Job, having been driven closer to God by the east wind of trial and sorrow, received from the hand of God twice as much as he had before.

We have the same lesson if we return to the story of Joseph. When to him as a young man God gave those wonderful dreams and visions, when he saw the shocks of grain in the field bowing down to him and the stars in the sky making obeisance to him, and in the innocency of his heart he talked with his brothers about it, he was not experienced enough with the world's keen-edged tools to know that God was in it all, and that the jealousy of these very

brothers would be the east wind that would send him to exile and slavery—down into Egypt to get ready for his great career. "Shalt thou indeed reign over us?" said his jealous brothers, as they intuitively saw, what Joseph did not realize, the true message of his dreams. Hatred and envy toward the innocent boy filled their hearts, and it was not long before these things bore fruit, and they conspired together, saying, "We shall see what will become of his dreams!" And they did see! How different it all would have been if Joseph's east wind had driven him away from God and made him sour, sullen, and bitter-hearted; or if, alone among strangers, he had said, "God has forgotten me, and I might as well fall in with the customs of this wicked Egypt." If that had been the case, we should never have heard the story of Joseph. It would not have been worth writing in the Bible. It was because the east wind drove him near to God that he became great.

You may see the east wind in the life of Moses. It drives him away from the court of Egypt, drives him out a stranger in the desert, where for forty years he is an exile and a sheep-herder on the slopes of Mount Horeb; but that

east wind of trial drives him into deeper communion with God and ends in his becoming the one chosen to lead his people out of Egypt and the mightiest law-giver of all time.

Perhaps there is no life portrayed to us in the Bible where the east wind is illustrated with more signal power for beneficence in a human life than in the story of Jacob. Jacob was ambitious. He was the younger son, but he wanted all the perquisites of the elder son. He took advantage of his brother's weakness, and he used deception and fraud to cheat his blind father. He thought he would cheat God by cunning. But when a man undertakes to do that, then it is that God takes a hand, and he is never at a loss for means to use. In this case he used the anger of Esau. There was murder in the air. Esau threatened his brother's life, and he was the kind of man to do the deed. So Jacob fled for his life across the desert. The east wind blew hard and terribly upon him, and by the time he came to Bethel, lonely and homesick, with his pride broken, he was ready for that wonderful vision in which he saw the ladder of heaven set down at his feet, and the

angels coming and going, and God's assurance that he had not completely cast him away.

But it takes more than one vision to cleanse a heart like Jacob's. The east wind continued to blow on Jacob. He had been a deceiver; now he had to take his own medicine. Laban showed him that that was a game at which two could play. His wages were changed ten times. At last, in despair, he fled away with his family and his herds. Finally, escaped from Laban, the news comes across the desert that Esau is coming to meet him with an army. What a cold, sharp blast that was out of the east into the face of Jacob! The trouble with Jacob was that up to this time, despite the vision at Bethel and all the mercy of God to him, he was a selfish, designing, self-centered man. His reliance was not really in God. He depended on himself. He expected to win by matching cunning with cunning. But now it seemed to him that he was to meet his due. He could not meet Esau with any hope of contending with him. He deserved only death at the hands of Esau, and so far as he was able to see, Esau was determined to get even with him. Ruin, only ruin, stared him in the face. That

was the day that Jacob's fate was in the balance, and his salvation was that this east wind drove him to God. The great night of Jacob's life was when, at Jabbok Ford, he went out into the darkness alone to pray to God. He had no soldiers, he had no arms, he could not fight, and there was no way of escaping Esau by cunning. And I doubt not that it seemed to Jacob that this was poetic justice—that after the way he had treated his brother his brother should now slay him. And so, in this awful hour of darkness, his sin against his brother came back and stared him in the face and drove him out alone into the night.

Oh, if a man will only be driven to God, the east wind is a blessed wind! That night God's angel came and wrestled with Jacob. All night the struggle went on. It is hard for selfishness to surrender. It is hard for a man just to give up to God and let him have his entire way in the heart. Again and again the angel said to Jacob, "Let me go, the day breaketh." But Jacob realized now that in God was his only hope, and so, at last, he hung on to the angel and cried, "I will not let thee go, except thou bless me." The angel touched him on the thigh

and left him limping and crippled, but left him full of peace, and on the morrow he went forward to reconciliation with his brother. Henceforth, he had a new name. He was no longer Jacob, but Israel, because, as a prince, he had power with God and with man, and had prevailed.

Some of you are in the midst of an east wind. You have sinned against God. You have lived your own selfish life. You have gone the way of life, depending largely on your own strength. You have used religion, if at all, as a sort of adornment or decoration. You have patronized God. You have been willing to throw a crumb now and then to some of the great forces by which God helps men and is blessing the world, but down deep in the center of your own being you are as self-centered as was Jacob. But the east wind, it may be, has already blown in your face. It may be in your business, it may be in your health, it may be among your friends; ah, man is so vulnerable that there are a thousand windows through which the east wind of God may smite him and break his heart and make him know his weakness. Oh, my friend, if you feel the east wind,

do not stiffen your neck like Ephraim, or like Tyre; but, like Jacob, surrender and let your trials bring you to God.

Sorrow and trial are sure to come to us all. Even Christ was made perfect through suffering, that he might be our Savior. Gay and indifferent as some of you are now, you will come to your Gethsemane. God grant that, when it comes, or if you are there now, you may find God there, and angels there to minister to you, as did Jesus!

"In golden youth, when seems the earth
A summer land for singing mirth,
When souls are glad and hearts are light
And not a shadow lurks in sight,
We do not know it, but there lies
Somewhere, veiled under evening skies,
A garden each must some time see,
Gethsemane, Gethsemane,
Somewhere his own Gethsemane.

"With joyous steps we go our ways,
Love lends a halo to the days.
Light sorrows sail like clouds, afar,
We laugh and say how strong we are,
We hurry on, and, hurrying, go
Close to the border-land of woe
That waits for you and waits for me,
Gethsemane, Gethsemane,
Forever waits Gethsemane.

"Down shadowy lanes, across strange streams,
Bridged over by our broken dreams,
Behind the misty cape of years,
Close to the great salt font of tears
The garden lies; strive as you may
You can not miss it in your way.
All paths that have been or shall be
Pass somewhere through Gethsemane.

"All those who journey, soon or late
Must pass within the garden's gate;
Must kneel alone in darkness there
And battle with some fierce despair.
God pity those who can not say—
'Not mine, but Thine'; who only pray,
'Let this cup pass', and can not see
The purpose of Gethsemane.
Gethsemane, Gethsemane,
God help us through Gethsemane!"

THE NORTH WIND—THE WIND THAT PURIFIES CHARACTER

"A stormy wind came out of the north, a great cloud, with a fire infolding itself, and a brightness round about it, and out of the midst thereof as it were glowing metal, out of the midst of the fire."—Ezek. 1: 4.

THIS is a wonderful vision. It is a great windstorm from the north—the cloud carried by the stern blast of the north wind. As it draws near, it is seen that there is a fire in the midst of the cloud, and in the midst of the fire, infolded in it as in a furnace, there is the glowing metal that has been melted in the fierce heat for some future fashioning. The suggestion is apparent and of the greatest teaching value. We have studied the east wind as a wind from God, the breath of Jehovah blowing out of the wilderness upon Ephraim, drying up all the selfish fountains of joy and all human sources of power. We have studied its blowing on Tyre in the day of her glory when she was the commercial center of the world, and noted that the man or the people who will not

be driven by the east wind of God to repentance and righteousness is sure to be broken under its stern judgment.

And now we come to this north wind. It also is the breath of Jehovah. It is not only necessary that a man should lose his self-dependence—that he should come to recognize the fact that his strength is in God—but the heart must be purified, the motives and purposes of life must be refined and cleansed, in order that he may be in harmony with his God. The lesson is clear that the north wind brings with it the fire of God to melt the hard metals of the soul and refine and fashion them after the divine plan.

Did you ever look through a foundry? Did you note the great piles of scrap-iron—heaps of columns, broken, bent, split, shattered pieces of iron—gathered there to be melted? Have you stood by and watched while they tapped a furnace and seen the molten metal flowing out in a stream of fire, sending up a sputter of sparks whiter than the stars? There is the long row of men, faces sweating and sooty under the strange glare of the fire, pushing their long-handled ladles under the white stream to carry

the melted metal to be run into the molds. And when you saw that, you knew that all those great heaps of scrap-iron, all those ugly, twisted, and marred fragments, would some day go into that same furnace to be melted over, and come out to be molded into beautiful, shapely pillars. So God's purpose in the north wind is to bring to our souls the furnace of discipline, the refining fire that shall melt down our stubbornness and our selfishness, shall make us submissive to him, shall purge away the dross, and shall cleanse us of every evil thing, that the divine Christ looking into our hearts may see his own image reflected there.

I. I think we understand Scripture truth better when we see it incarnated in a human life. When we studied the work of the east wind, we studied its influence on Joseph and Moses, and still more at length in the evolution of the character of Jacob. We saw the fierce blast of that east wind that drove Jacob in his young manhood into exile. Then again and again it blew upon him until at Jabbok Ford, in his middle age, it drove him into the arms of his God in complete surrender.

In studying the north wind as the one which

purifies character, I am sure that we could find no more typical human life than that of David. What a contrast there is between the youth of David and the youth of Jacob! Jacob seems to have been a selfish, cunning, deceiving creature; but David's youth was very different. You will search in vain for anything to rebuke in all of David's younger days. He followed the sheep upon the hills. His faith in God was as simple as the life he lived. He prayed for and received strength with which to fight the wild beasts that threatened his flock. He seems to have had no selfish ambition. When the prophet came out to select some one who should be anointed king, all the other boys of the family of Jesse were on hand. Each, no doubt, cherished some secret hope that he might be selected. But David did not appear. He was at his work in the hills, and they had to send for him and bring him in, and it is probable that he was more amazed than his brethren when the divine selection was made known, the holy horn of oil was lifted above his head, and he was anointed king. Take his early relations to Saul, his battle with Goliath, his friendship with Jonathan, his life after-

ward when he was in that difficult rôle of a popular national hero, and you will find nothing to rebuke. He was modest, unassuming, faithful, true to God and to his duty. David's temptations and his sins came later.

David is a striking illustration of a great truth which is not preached about as much as it should be; that is, the insidious dangers and temptations that come to middle-aged people. We have multiplied sermons and volumes of warning concerning the dangers and perils of youth where we preach one concerning the perils of middle life. But the perils of youth are not more real than those peculiar dangers that ambush the pathway which men and women travel in the noontide of human life. Perhaps it is because men are off their guard. Youth is guarded by father and mother and teachers and older friends. The child and the youth are continually reminded of the importance of right living; but when a man steps out beyond guardianship and enters into the competitions of life on his own responsibility, he ofttimes seems to feel a sense of freedom which runs into license, and he falls a victim to sins of which his youth gave no prophecy.

Then, if the discipline of God's north wind will not save him, there is no salvation for him.

The story of David is full of the north wind with its purifying fires. How hot must have been the furnace which it brought to David in the jealousy of Saul! How his heart sank within him that day when Saul threw the javelin at him, and the iron which missed his body entered into his soul in the conviction that Saul meant to kill him! What a tender touch there is in that story of the meeting of Jonathan and David in the forest, after Saul had attacked David! How they hung on each other's necks and wept! They seemed to have had a premonition that it was their last meeting. They were never again to enjoy the bliss of friendly association. You can see how this melted David's heart and how fierce was the fire of his anguish, when you listen to his heart-cry on the battlefield of Gilboa, where Jonathan perished:

> "I am distressed for thee, my brother Jonathan:
> Very pleasant hast thou been unto me;
> Thy love to me was wonderful,
> Passing the love of women."

And you may see something of the purifying influence of that refining fire of sorrow

when David, at last established in his kingdom, inquires of those about him, "Is there yet any left of the house of Saul, that I may show him kindness for Jonathan's sake?" And when they told him of Mephibosheth, the crippled son of Jonathan, David brought that representative of his dead friend into his royal home and gave him a place at the king's table in proof of his undying love for Jonathan. Cardinal Newman saw in David's sorrow over Jonathan the heat of the furnace that refined his soul:

"O heart of fire! misjudged by wilful man,
Thou flower of Jesse's race!
What woe was thine, when thou and Jonathan
Last greeted face to face!
He doomed to die, thou on us to impress
The portent of a blood-stained holiness.

"Yet it was well;—for so, 'mid cares of rule
And crime's encircling tide,
A spell was o'er thee, zealous one, to cool
Earth-joy and kingly pride;
With battle-scene and pageant, prompt to blend
The pale, calm specter of a blameless friend."

But the mid-day of David's career is stained and marred by the sins of strength and passion. Gifted, magnetic, full of romance and

heroism, he falls into grievous sins and his heart turns away from God. The formal service of God went on as before, but there was no longer communion of soul. That young shepherd who had prayed to God as simply and naturally as a child prattles to its mother, who had sung his morning psalm on the hills of Bethlehem reverently and lovingly and exultingly as the lark sings on his mounting wing, had lost heart out of his worship because sin had made a black cloud between his soul and God. Then came the north wind. How fiercely it blew! The rebellion of Absalom arises. David had seen it coming, but could not believe it. At last it comes down on him with fierce blasts and he is driven from his capital city, and as he comes along toward the Jordan, near the crossing, Shimei, one of the hill men, who has long hated David, comes down out of the hills to humiliate him, and throws stones at him and hurls on him insults and curses. The people who are with David want to kill Shimei, but David knows that it is the north wind from God and cries out in anguish: "Let him alone, let him curse; the Lord hath bidden him."

A little later comes that other day when David is watching and waiting for news from the battle, and is afraid to hear the news. If Absalom wins, it is his own death warrant, and if his own hosts win, then he fears for Absalom, his wicked son, whom he still loves. Is there anything more pitiful in all literature than David the king watching there and waiting, hoping against hope, until at last the blow falls and he climbs the stairs, groaning forth those heart-breaking sentences: "O my son Absalom, my son, my son Absalom! Would I had died for thee, O Absalom, my son, my son!" The literature of grief has no language so full of pathos.

Nathaniel Parker Willis, in what is perhaps his finest poem, paints the picture of David's farewell to Absalom. He shows us David standing by the bier of his son and crying aloud:

"Alas! my noble boy! that thou shouldst die!
Thou who wert made so beautifully fair!
That death should settle in thy glorious eye,
And leave his stillness in this clustering hair!
How could he mark thee for the silent tomb!
My proud boy, Absalom!

"Cold is thy brow, my son! and I am chill,
As to my bosom I have tried to press thee!
How was I wont to feel thy pulses thrill,
Like a rich harp-string, yearning to caress thee,
And hear thy sweet, 'My father!' from these dumb
And cold lips, Absalom!

"But death is on thee. I shall hear the gush
Of music, and the voices of the young;
And life will pass me in the mantling blush,
And the dark tresses to the soft winds flung;—
But thou no more, with thy sweet voice, shalt come
To meet me, Absalom!

"And oh! when I am stricken, and my heart,
Like a bruised reed, is waiting to be broken,
How will its love for thee, as I depart,
Yearn for thine ear to drink its last deep token!
It were so sweet, amid death's gathering gloom,
To see thee, Absalom!

"And now, farewell! 'Tis hard to give thee up,
With death so like a gentle slumber on thee;—
And thy dark sin!—Oh! I could drink the cup,
If from this woe its bitterness had won thee.
May God have called thee, like a wanderer, home,
My lost boy, Absalom!"

It was in such a furnace that the sinful heart of David was melted and his sins purged, and he came forth a ransomed and redeemed man into a new life of humility and faith and communion with God. And when David went back again to Jerusalem and they built a ferry-boat

(the only one mentioned in the Bible) to carry the king's household over the Jordan, swollen by some sudden flood, the first man that met him on the other side was Shimei, who had cursed, and insulted, and thrown stones at him on the day when he had fled from Jerusalem for his life. David's friends wanted him to condemn Shimei to death, but David would not listen to it. He felt that it was through God's mercy that he himself was spared, and he exclaims, "Shall there any man be put to death this day in Israel? For do not I know that I am this day king over Israel?" And he turned in forgiveness to the poor wretch kneeling at his feet. My friends, it makes us wondrous kind and brotherly and charitable and forgiving to others when we feel that we owe everything we have to the mercy and forgiveness of God.

Some of you are in the midst of the storm, and the north wind has brought the furnace of fire. You are in the furnace now, it may be, and God is seeking to refine your nature and make you a nobler man or a truer woman. Remember, the furnace will mean either salvation or still greater ruin.

II. The north wind can purify only the soul that surrenders itself to be melted and shaped by the divine fire of trial. Everything depends upon the spirit in which we receive the discipline of God. If we are rebellious against God, we get no benefit from life's trials. Some people are soured by trouble, others are made sweeter than the violets in springtime. Under the trial some faces are darkened by frowns, others are lightened and illuminated by great faith. When the north wind blows, some are hardened by their sorrows and others are softened and become mellow and tender. Some men stiffen themselves against the blast and are broken by disaster; others, yielding to it, receive its strength into themselves and are energized and magnified by the north wind and the refining fires. If we confidingly yield our lives to be guided of God, then we can be sure that God will bring good out of everything that comes to us. Even out of death, God can bring good. Even in sickness and in grief God is able to bring great compensations and blessings. From loss and anguish and poverty there is often derived infinite blessing; and to

the heart that trusts God good will come out of every furnace of trial.

George Macdonald, the poet-novelist, gives this little fragment of conversation in one of his books. A woman says, "I wonder why God made me," and she continues very bitterly, "I am sure I don't know where was the use of making me." To which her friend replies, "Perhaps not much yet; but then he hasn't done with you yet. He is making you now, and you don't like it."

I am sure it would give us more patience with ourselves and with God if we would always keep that in mind. We are now in the process of being made, and God is at work on us and has not yet finished with us. If we surrender ourselves to him, everything shall work together for our good; and when we see Christ clearly in glory, we shall be like him.

The heart submissive and yielding to the north wind that carries the heavenly fire is able always to come off victorious and triumphant in spite of the handicaps of life. A few years ago there passed away from earth in Edinburgh a famous preacher, Dr. George Matheson, who Sir Robertson Nicoll declares was the

greatest Scotchman since Thomas Chalmers. He is an excellent illustration of greatness through submission of the soul to God under the stress of life. When he was twenty years of age he left a surgeon's office with these words echoing in his ears: "Better see your friends quickly, for soon the darkness will settle, and you will see them no more forever." That was the doctor's way of telling him that at the very morning of his career he was to lose his sight and go on through life blind. His biographer tells us that when the darkness came he shut himself up and gave one whole day to communion with God. Then he came forth sweet of spirit, courageous of soul, happy of heart, with his suffering turned to song. And it was out of a furnace like that that Matheson came to sing:

"O Light that foll'west all my way,
I yield my flickering torch to thee;
My heart restores its borrowed ray,
That in thy sunshine's blaze its day
May brighter, fairer be.

"O Joy that seekest me through pain,
I can not close my heart to thee;
I trace the rainbow through the rain,
And feel the promise is not vain
That morn shall tearless be.

"O Cross that liftest up my head,
I dare not ask to fly from thee;
I lay in dust life's glory dead,
And from the ground there blossoms red,
Life that shall endless be."

Life is sanctified and glorified by struggles. We should not fear the north wind. We should not feel that God is angry with us because it has blown upon us and infolded us in its fiery heart, but we should rather feel that this is a sure testimony of his love for us and his purpose to develop within us a greater, richer life. The noble thing for us to do is not to try to escape our struggle and our burdens, but to meet them faithfully and seek to get out of them that which God means for us. Not one of us but at some time in our lives has had a fellow-feeling with the psalmist when he exclaimed, "Oh, that I had wings like a dove. For then I would fly away and be at rest. Lo, then would I wander far off and lodge in the wilderness." We have felt, as he did, under the stress of our burden that we should like to get just as far away from it as the winds could carry us, with the swiftest wings that ever were made. But that spirit is ignoble, and in our

better hours we know that it is cowardly. One of the old scholars, commenting on the psalm, said that it would have been far more honorable for the man to have asked for the strength of an ox to bear his trials than for the wings of a dove to flee from them.

III. The final heartening thought is that we never make conquest of ourselves through struggle and refining heat that we do not obtain victories for others as well. One of the sweet and saintly souls of a generation of American Christians was Fanny Crosby. She knew what the north wind meant, and she knew the furnace of fire which it carried; but what gracious blessings she got for herself and for others out of the blast? A lady at Northfield asked a friend of hers who knew Fanny Crosby to carry this story to her:

"Twelve years ago I was assailed by a great temptation at an important crisis in my life, and although I had been a professing Christian, I was on the point of deciding for the wrong course. In this state of mind I entered a little chapel, not so much to hear the sermon as to listen to the singing, and most of all to think out my problem. I was so absorbed that I did not hear one word of the sermon; but when the soloist began to sing Fanny Crosby's sweet song, 'I shall see him face to face,' my heart melted. It seemed that God had spoken to me through the voice of that song.

I decided at once to take the right path, and ever since I have felt that that hymn saved me. I have longed to see Fanny Crosby. If you ever meet her, please tell her the story for me."

Fanny Crosby had yielded herself so completely to the furnace of trial that refined and purified that she had come face to face with her Lord and was able to bring him face to face with others. It may be so with every one of us. God help us so to come face to face and heart to heart in fellowship with Christ that we shall never lack his sure guidance. Then we shall be able to sing with Robert Burdette:

"There is no path in this desert waste,
For the winds have swept the shifting sands.
The trail is blind where the storms have raced,
And a stranger, I, in these fearsome lands.
But I journey with a lightsome tread;
I do not falter nor turn aside,
For I see his figure just ahead—
He knows the way—my Guide.

"There is no path in this trackless sea;
No map is lined on the restless waves;
The ocean snares are strange to me,
Where the unseen wind in its fury raves.
But it matters naught; my sails are set,
And my swift prow tosses the seas aside,
For the changeless stars are stedfast yet,
And I sail by his star-blazed trail—my Guide.

"There is no way in this starless night;
There is naught but cloud in the inky skies;
The black night smothers me, left and right,
I stare with a blind man's straining eyes.
But my steps are firm, for I can not stray;
The path to my feet seems light and wide;
For I hear his voice—'I am the Way!'
And I sing as I follow him on—my Guide."

THE WEST WIND—THE WIND THAT INSPIRES GROWTH AND FERTILITY

"When ye see a cloud rising in the west straightway ye say, There cometh a shower; and so it cometh to pass."—Luke 12: 54.

JESUS has thus stamped the west wind as forever joined to the season of showers. The east wind with its driving blast and the north wind with its cleansing force may blow for a time, but to the full round year there must come the time of the west wind that shall speak to buried bulbs and awaken all nature out of death-like sleep. It is sometimes pictured most beautifully in the Scriptures. The psalmist sings:

"He giveth snow like wool;
He scattereth the hoar frost like ashes.
He casteth forth his ice like morsels:
Who can stand before his cold?"

And then the singer beholds the cloud coming out of the west and its miracle of the west wind, and he sings again:

"He sendeth out his word and melteth them:
He causeth his wind to blow, and the waters flow."

In the beautiful Song of Solomon we have one of the most realistic pictures of the transformation that comes under the reign of the west wind. The royal singer bursts forth in exclamation:

"For, lo, the winter is past;
The rain is over and gone;
The flowers appear on the earth;
The time of the singing of birds is come,
And the voice of the turtle-dove is heard in our land;
The fig-tree ripeneth her green figs,
And the vines are in blossom;
They give forth their fragrance."

I. The west wind is the wind of the springtime. It is the wind of inspiration. It speaks to the crocus bulbs sometimes under the snow, and they awaken and push their courageous tips out through the icy covering. It speaks to the Jack-in-the-pulpits in the swamps and the wild cabbage in the marshes. It speaks to the sap deep hidden in the tree roots, and the sap comes pulsating up through the great stems and out to the finger-tips of the long branches. It speaks to the red bud, and its flaming banner

waves in the leafless forests. It speaks to the wild crab apple, and its fragrant blossoms clothe the ragged tree with glory. It speaks to the south hillside, and the violet roots hear it whistling through the trees, and carpets of white and blue spread abroad as if in a night to prophesy the splendor of the coming summer time. The robin and the redbird hear its message and come to sing a glad refrain. But, above all, it speaks to the grass in the pasture and plain and prairie and in the little glade in the woods, until everywhere, from the edge of the sea to the top of the mountains, the grass-roots hear the call of the west wind, and the whole world turns green with freshness, with the courage and the youthful vigor of eternal hope. After all, the grass is the real glory of the springtime. Flowers, whether blooming here and there in the sward or in the woods, and even the leaf-crowned and blossoming trees, are only occasional decorations. It would be a barren, desolate world if the west wind did not know how to call the common, every-day grass out of winter into springtime hope, clothing the whole world with a green robe of beauty and gladness. When James

Buckham died, not long ago, his friends found among his papers an unpublished poem called "The Prayer of the Grass" which beautifully sets forth what we owe in thanks to God for the grass of the springtime:

"O God of heaven! hear my prayer,
Who doth thy fields clothe everywhere.

"I thank thee, Lord, for sun and sky,
For all delights that border nigh
The mothering earth; for nightly dew;
For boughs that sway across the blue;
For ample storehouse of the plain;
For sweet refreshment of the rain;
For joy of growth; for every day's
Antiphonal of love and praise.
I thank thee for the thrill of spring,
That gladdens every living thing;
For summer's glory, and the crown
Of autumn's harvest gold and brown.
I thank thee, too, for winter's rest,
And skies in sober drapings dressed.
With all that is, in glad accord,
For life's full round I thank thee, Lord!

"God of the stars, how lowly I
To senseless dust and stones so nigh!
My roots the creeping things enfold;
My head is pillowed on the mold;
Yet thou, the God of sky and peak,
Of wings that soar, of lips that speak,
God of the lights beyond the sun,
And systems into star-mesh spun,

Thou dost regard the lowly grass
Trodden of cattle when they pass.
This is the joy that doth me raise
Above my lowly lot and place.
Thou knowest every blade of mine,
And shapest it with care divine.
Thou dost protect each flow'r that springs,
And robe more royally than kings.
Yea, tho the crushed blade never grows,
Thy loving heart in heaven knows.

"'Tis beautiful to be thy grass,
And feel thee nigh, and hear thee pass,
And do thy will, and seek thy praise,
And live to please thee all the days.
My humble needs to thee I bring;
My needs be my petitioning.
Thou knowest, Master, all and best.
Do as thou wilt, is my request.
Accept my praise, and hear my prayer,
Who dost thy fields clothe everywhere!"

Now in all this we have a beautiful figure of what God is all the while doing in human life. Men go their own way, headstrong and selfish, forgetful of God, and the east wind humiliates them and drives them back from their own dependence upon themselves. The north wind's fierce blast sweeps through the life to separate the chaff from the wheat, or, to use the figure which Ezekiel saw, to melt down the metals of the soul in the furnace of trial until

it is submissive to God. Then the west wind, with its inspiration to growth and fertility, comes forth to work its beautiful transformation. In a wonderful paragraph in the thirty-fourth chapter of Ezekiel you may see what God has in his heart for the man who, turning from his selfish and evil way, opens his life to the west wind of hope: "I will make with them a covenant of peace, and I will cause evil beasts to cease out of the land; and they shall dwell securely in the wilderness, and sleep in the woods. And I will make them and the places round about my hill a blessing; and I will cause the shower to come down in its season; there shall be showers of blessing. And the tree of the field shall yield its fruit, and the earth shall yield its increase, and they shall be secure in their land; and they shall know that I am Jehovah, when I have broken the bars of their yoke."

II. The west wind is the wind which brings mingled showers and sunshine. It brings some days cold and raw, but they too are necessary for growth, and it brings other days warm and gentle and soft with kindly showers, and other days that are bright and full of the sympathy

of heaven shining from the sun in the clear sky above, and appealing to every living thing to do its best and achieve its full career.

Most of us have a sort of haunting dream of a time when there will be no bad weather in our lives. We imagine that if everything could go just to suit our desires, life would be at its best; but I imagine we would not find it so. I saw the other day a pretty story of Abraham Lincoln. It was written by Lucy Randall Comfort in *The Magazine of American History*. Nearly fifty years ago she went with another lady to call on Abraham Lincoln. It was at a crowded morning reception in the White House, and the two ladies found themselves in the presence of that great, sad-faced, homely man. Suddenly, as they looked at him, they became shy and timid and dumb. Then one of them burst forth with, "We have been enjoying your beautiful roses so much, Mr. President!" They had just come out of the conservatory. The moment she said it, the woman thought she had said an idiotic thing, but the deep-set, wistful eyes of the President lighted in an instant, and his smile grew more gravely sweet. "Fragrant, aren't they?" an-

swered Mr. Lincoln, and he seemed to muse on it, and said, "Yes, yes, but it is possible, tho you ladies mightn't believe it, to have too much even of the fragrance of roses." By this time the ushers and the President's wife were doing their best to keep him from holding up the line any longer with his conversation. But paying no attention to them, the great, sad-faced man went on: "Twice, yes twice, I have been in a place where sweetness became a positive surfeit. Talking of roses, first, I remember once after a long day's drive through the south of Georgia I came to a solitary place where two roads met. Just about sunset it was—and there in a triangle were roses, hundreds of roses, perhaps thousands, all in bloom, and the perfume was overpowering. It made me feel faint, just a little, you know. Perhaps a house had been there once. Anyway the roses were there. And once, down South, I rode on horseback at night through a patch of dense woods where the Alabama nightingales were singing, scores and scores of 'em, and calling to each other. There is no bird music in the world sweeter than that of the Alabama nightingale, but I felt that I could not have endured it

much longer. It was like a pain. So you see"—seeming to rouse suddenly to the fact of his wife's impatience and the waiting line beyond—"there can be too much, even of flowers and music. I am glad you liked the roses, ladies!" Even fragrant roses and sweet-singing nightingales are more highly appreciated when they are not in too great profusion and where they come mingled with other things.

So God's west wind in human life brings us both pain and joy; but through the mingling of them, as sunshine and cloud are mingled in the springtime, God gives us that sweetest thing in human life—the gift of sympathy. For we must remember that if we had no pain or sorrow we would have no sympathy. We would not know how to sympathize with others, for we would have no way to measure, or judge, or conceive of their condition when they were in trouble. Robert Browning illustrates this in one of his poems. He describes an Arab talking about a king. He was abusing him, saying all sorts of evil things about him, declaring there was nothing good in him, and that he would not listen to anything in his defense. But the man to whom the Arab was

speaking said, "Have you heard that he is suffering from an incurable disease?" The Arab changed his tone. "Poor man! is that so? Can nothing be done?" All his hatred and cruel anger died in a moment because of his awakened sympathy. So the trials of life contain rich blessings, fraught with inspiration, if our hearts are open to all of God's winds. I sympathize with some one who sings:

"The world, they say, is gettin' old, an' weary as can be,
But write me down as sayin', it's good enough for me!
It's good enough, with all its grief, its pleasure and its pain,
An' there's a ray of sunshine for every drop of rain!

"They stumble in the lonesome dark, they cry for light to see,
But write me down as sayin', it's light enough for me!
It's light enough to lead us on from where we faint and fall,
An' the hilltops nearest heaven wear the brightest crown of all.

"They talk about the fadin' hopes that mock the years to be,
But write me down as sayin' there's hope enough for me,
Over the old world's wailin' the sweetest music swells,
In the stormiest nights I listen and hear the bells—the bells!

"This world o' God's is brighter than we ever dreamed or know;
Its burden's growin' lighter an' it's love that makes it so.

An' I'm thankful that I'm livin', when Love's blessedness
I see,
'Neath a heaven that's forgivin' when the bells ring home
to me."

III. Perhaps no typical character given us in the Scriptures illustrates so clearly as does that of Paul the blowing of these first three winds into a single human life and their final result in fertility of soul and in beauty and richness of character. As Saul of Tarsus, selfish and bigoted, full of that stiff-necked egotism that brooks no interference, Paul went on his way toward Damascus. There was murder in his heart. He meant to hale men and women to prison and to the executioner's block. He was fresh from tasting blood in the death of Stephen, the man of the angel face. When I think of that scene of the mob laying their clothes down at Saul's feet, and of his standing calmly by watching and listening while they stoned that beautiful young saint and gnashed on him with their teeth, until, falling to the earth, the dying young martyr cried out to God, "Lay not this sin to their charge"; and when I remember that even then his heart did not relent, but he must go on to Damascus to

see other sights like that—I do not wonder that Paul said he was the chief of sinners.

But you know the story—how on the public highway at noontide the east wind struck him straight in the face and brought him to the ground blind and helpless and drove him to God. And if you follow the life of Paul after that, you will see how these winds intermingled in his wonderful life. See him that day in Philippi where he and Silas were stoned. Once he stood by and saw Stephen stoned to death. Now he himself is stoned until he falls bleeding and unconscious, and they carry him into the jail with his comrade. These bruised and bloody men they put in the dungeon, and wounded as they are, thrust their feet into the stocks. Surely the fierce north wind is blowing here. Yes, and it soon does its work. After a while they begin to talk to each other about their faith in God and in Jesus Christ their Savior. They remind each other of how the Master went to the cross counting it all joy because of the salvation he was to bring to to them. And as they think of these things, the west wind blows on their weary hearts and their courage is refreshed and their souls grow

glad, and at midnight they begin to sing—to sing songs of thanksgiving and gladness. The angels hear it on high and beg that they may come down with the power of an earthquake to shake the feet of God's saints loose from the stocks and throw open the prison doors. You know how these men came out and found the jailer ready to commit suicide, and how Paul, in his cheerful voice, cried out to him, and caught his attention, and won him to Christ then and there, so that not only the jailer but his entire household became Christians through Paul's devotion and earnest fidelity to the Master.

And this is a typical incident in the life of Paul. In his second letter to the Corinthians you hear him rejoicing and thanking God for the combined blowing of the north and west winds through the circumstances of his life. He exclaims, "But in everything commending ourselves, as ministers of God, in much patience, in affliction, in necessities, in distresses, in stripes, in imprisonments, in tumults, in labors, in watchings, in fastings, in pureness, in knowledge, in longsuffering, in kindness, in the Holy Spirit, in love unfeigned, in the

word of truth, in the power of God; by the armor of righteousness, on the right hand and on the left, by glory and dishonor, by evil report and good report; as deceivers, and yet true; as unknown, and yet well known; as dying, and behold we live; as chastened, and not killed; as sorrowful, yet always rejoicing; as poor, yet making many rich; as having nothing, and yet possessing all things." Again in that same letter he tells us how the north wind blew upon him as a thorn in the flesh, a messenger of Satan to buffet him. And he says the reason for it was "That I should not be exalted overmuch." He tells us that this north wind drove him to God, and he besought the Lord again and again and yet again that he might be relieved from it; but that in the shelter of the divine arms he heard God say, "My grace is sufficient for thee: for my power is made perfect in weakness." And Paul declares to us that under the inspiration of that divine voice he was able to say: "Most gladly, therefore, will I rather glory in my weaknesses, that the power of Christ may rest upon me. Wherefore, I take pleasure in weaknesses, in injury, in necessities, in persecutions, in dis-

tresses for Christ's sake, for when I am weak, then am I strong."

Let us not miss the great blessing of our theme. All the winds have the same purpose in God's heart. The east wind that drives to God, the north wind that brings the furnace of trial, and the west wind that brings showers, mingled with sunshine, all have the same purpose, to bring purity and nobility to our souls and fertility to our characters and deeds, and make us the kind of men and women that will go about the earth like our Master, doing good. It is for us to open our hearts and bare our lives to the winds of God that they may work their loving purpose, unresisted in us.

THE SOUTH WIND—THE WIND THAT BRINGS PEACE AND CHARM

"Come, thou south (wind); blow upon my garden that the spices thereof may flow out."—Song of Solomon 4:16.

THE south wind is the wind of the summer. The fierce east wind that strips life's branches to humility has wrought God's will. The cold blast from the north that pierces to the marrow and tries men's souls has passed. The blustering west wind, with mingled caresses and threatenings, quiets down as May turns its face toward June. Now comes the south wind, with its wonderful gift of color, to clothe the world with a charm out-rivaling all the dreams of man. The south wind and the sunshine are comrades, and under their alliance and fellowship all the fields of summer toil are clothed with beauty. Who is eloquent enough to describe the glory of summer? How beautiful is a ripened field of oats, white almost as the snow in winter; and how rich and golden a field of wheat ready for the reaper! And the

corn! Sometimes as I have ridden along on the train through hundreds of miles of corn-fields, I have seemed to look out upon an army of knights of the olden times when men went to battle plumed and tasseled and adorned. Every corn-stalk growing out of the rich soil, with its nodding plume, its rustling draperies, and its great hanging ears of yellow gold, all colored as tho the chemistry of nature had nothing else to do but to make it glorious, is a thing of beauty.

The south wind not only brings beauty, but it brings out the fragrance and spices of the summer world. Whoever knew a perfume sweeter than the breath of new-mown hay? And the gardens and the orchards, even the hedge-rows and the fence corners and the little pieces of swamp left in the marshy places untilled, grow beautiful and fragrant under the breath of the south wind.

The birds and the animals which the south wind calls into activity as the marauders of the summer are handsomely adorned. The squirrels that work havoc in the edges of the wheat, the cherry-birds that take toll of the red fruit, and even the black crows—the high-

way robbers of the corn-field—are handsome and picturesque.

So it is that the south wind brings beauty and charm to all the summer world, not only in the fields but in the orchards where it colors plums and peaches and apples in fellowship with the sun. It is also the wind that broods over the climax of man's toil and soothes the world into peace and quiet.

Here, then, we have our theme, our figures for the study of that divine influence which comes as the breath of God to ripen the spiritual graces and mature the fruits of the soul in a human life.

I. The first message of our theme is the gracious influence of the abiding of the loving Christ in our hearts. Jesus tells us that if we abide in him and he in us, we shall bring forth much fruit and our fruit will come to perfection. The Apostle John is the peculiar incarnation in the Bible of what the south wind can do for a human soul. John was a quick-tempered, easily aroused man, who wanted to bring down fire from heaven to burn up whole towns when they did not please him; but the winds of God wrought upon his life until his

fruitful soul was prepared for the south wind of divine love. And it is John who tells us the sweetest things about the love of God. It is he who says, "God is love." It is he who tells us "God is light, and in him is no darkness at all." It is he who gives us the last book of the Bible and whose loving heart saw wonderful visions of the triumph of our Lord.

It is only through sincere sympathy and love in our relations to each other in this world that peace and charm can come to mankind. Sidney Lanier, in his beautiful symphony, brings out in strong lines the truth that life can be made harmonious and musical in the spirit of love only:

"Life! Life! thou sea-fugue, writ from east to west,
Love, love alone can pore
On thy dissolving score
Of harsh half-phrasings,
Blotted ere writ,
And double erasings
Of chords most fit.
"Yea, Love, sole music-master blest,
May read my weltering palimpsest.
To follow Time's dying melodies through,
And never to lose the old in the new,
And ever to solve the discords true—
Love alone can do.

"And ever Love hears the poor folks' crying,
And ever Love hears the women sighing,
And ever sweet knighthood's death-defying,
And ever wise childhood's deep implying,
But never a trader's glozing and lying.

"And yet shall Love himself be heard,
Though long deferred, though long deferred:
O'er the modern waste a dove hath whirred:
Music is Love in search of a word."

The south wind of God brings us that wonderful magic which no one understands. Altho our friends grow old and fade and lose their outer charms that clothed them when first our attachment drew us to them, yet, under its strange influence, they become dearer to us. There is a very beautiful story which tells the romance in the life of the English poet, Alfred Tennyson. In 1830, at Somersby Rectory, Arthur Hallam was staying with the Tennysons and asked Emily Selwood to walk with him in the Fairy Wood. At a turn of the path they came upon Tennyson, who at sight of the slender, beautiful girl of seventeen, moving "like a light across those woodland ways," suddenly asked of her, "Are you a dryad or an oread wandering here?" But sweet as this is, the poem that he wrote to her

sixty years later when she was seventy-seven is infinitely sweeter. Remembering that meeting as he faced the sunset, he sang:

"There on the top of the down,
The wild heather round me and over me June's bright blue,
When I look'd at the bracken so bright and the heather so brown,
I thought to myself I would offer this book to you,
This, and my love together,
To you that are seventy-seven,
With a faith as clear as the heights of the June-blue heaven,
And a fancy as summer-new
As the green of the bracken amid the gloom of the heather."

Sir Robertson Nicoll, commenting on this tribute of Tennyson's, declares that in all love poetry the grandest line he ever saw are these words, "To you, that are seventy-seven."

It is the south wind which, bringing us into fellowship with other souls, revealing to us the kinship and brotherhood of our human lives, helps us to know the love of God. It is this same apostle of the south wind, the beloved disciple John, who tells us, "We know that we have passed out of death unto life because we love the brethren." And again he says, "If a man say, I love God, and hateth his brother, he is a liar: for he that loveth not his brother whom he hath seen, can not love God whom he

hath not seen. And this commandment have we from him, that he who loveth God love his brother also."

Some poet sings of love as "The Revealer." This beautifully brings out the way in which our human love brings us into the love of God:

"Ye are always singing the good Lord's praise,
And publishing all that his hand
Has wrought for you in the bygone days,
And all that his heart has planned.

"And verily all that ye say is true;
For I gratefully confess
That whatever the Lord has done for you
He has done for me no less.

"But when I remember the weary ways
Which my feeble feet have trod,
And the human love which all my days
Has helped me along the road,
Then the love of man is my song of praise
As well as the love of God.

"And I hardly think I would ever have seen
The love of God so clear,
Unless the love of man had been
So visible and near."

II. The south wind is the wind of God's quickening spirit. The east wind stript us of our self-dependence and drove us back to

God for strength; the north wind brought us to God's furnace of trial in which the soul might be refined and lose its base alloy; in the west wind there came a season of fruitfulness, a time of bursting bulbs and opening buds, the beginning of helpfulness and usefulness in the service of God; in the south wind we find a time when the spirit of the ever-living God, blowing upon our hearts, warms our affections. Being already chastened by the north wind of trial and inspired by the west wind of hope, we shall have that conscious presence of God with us, that charm of personal devotion to our Lord, that warmth of love for him and for others which shall enable us to bring God into saving relations with other souls.

Our supreme illustration must be in the actual story of God's doings with men. Let us note the relation of the south wind to the entire group of early Christians. If you take up your gospels and the Acts of the Apostles, and study the life of Christ and his disciples, you will see the east wind blowing in the Garden of Gethsemane, and around that fire in the high priest's courtyard where Peter tries to warm his cold hands in the hour of his cowardice;

and again in Pilate's hall, where Christ is tried; and yonder on Golgotha's rugged summit, where he hangs upon the cross. What awful days of alternating east and north winds those were for the disciples—days of fear and terror, when all their hopes seemed to be beaten down to the ground! Then came Easter morning with its west wind of hope. Then followed forty days of occasional meetings and conferences with their risen Lord. Hopes they had never known before swelled large within them, as the buds swell on the trees in the springtime. And then came the day of the ascension. Jesus takes them out to Bethany, and lifting his hands above their heads, prays God's blessing upon them and ascends out of their sight. While they stand with breaking hearts and tear-wet eyes, gazing after their departed Lord, angels stand by them with words of promise concerning the future.

Then we see that band of perhaps a hundred and twenty men and women, who had given up their avocations and surrendered their whole lives to follow after Christ, going away and renting a quiet upper room where they may pray together and seek the blessing and wis-

dom and power of God to carry out the words of Christ among men. There they tarried day after day until, without previous notice or announcement, as they prayed the south wind began to blow upon them. Luke writing the story of it says, "And suddenly there came from heaven a sound as of the rushing of a mighty wind, and it filled all the house where they were sitting. . . . And they were all filled with the Holy Spirit."

You know the story of that day—how they went forth, those timid, fearful people, with their hearts glowing under the heat of God's south wind; how Peter began to preach and that little company of hot, burning souls scattered themselves through the crowd that gathered, each bearing testimony of what he or she knew about the love of God in Jesus Christ, and three thousand friends were won to Christ in that single day. There you have the credentials of God's south wind. Those rough, burry-speeched men who knew nothing above the common fisher-talk; and those women like Mary Magdalene and that other woman of Sychar, whose repute had been evil; and grafter folks like Zacchæus, and street-beggar-

people like blind Bartimæus, under the warmth of the south wind became the most charming and lovable people on the earth. It was the cultivation of the Spirit of God.

And what wonderful things the Spirit of God can do in a human soul! It can make the most common life glorious beyond all our dreams of angelic loveliness, if the graces of the soul have but free career to grow under this breath of God. If our religious life has lost its zest of enthusiasm, the fire of its devotion, the tenderness of its loving sympathy, then let us know that the cure for it all is to open our hearts to the breath of the Spirit of God that is able to rouse and quicken us into newness of life. That is a wonderful vision which God revealed to Ezekiel, where he showed him the valley full of human bones; like a place in which a fierce battle had been fought and multitudes slain, and, according to ancient custom, the dead left unburied till the flesh was all consumed and the bones dried, divided, and scattered about. When he had gone round and round, and after careful survey of the bones found them to be very many and very dry, the marrow from within as well

as the flesh from without being utterly wasted, God inquired of him, "Can these dry bones live?" To which he answered, with humility and faith, "O Lord God, thou knowest." No created power could restore them to life; but if God should please to put forth his power, they might be raised from the dead and live. The Lord then said to him, "Prophesy over these bones." He commanded Ezekiel to predict their resurrection, to call upon them to hear his word and to speak over them the promises concerning their being united and restored to life. Under the divine direction the prophet spoke, and at God's command the wind blew upon them and they were restored to life. Sinews and flesh came upon those dry bones and they stood about him with warm hearts sending the life-blood through their veins, and eyes flashing with the fire of hope and courage—an enthusiastic army.

This old vision is full of illustrative truth. The Church of Jesus Christ often lacks power because the religion of many of its members degenerates into a ghastly form or creed, with no flesh on the bones, no sinews of influence or power, no unity of purpose, no generous, lov-

ing cooperation to do the will of God, no spiritual life and energy. Such a church may have a name to live, but in deed and in truth it is always dead. Oh, for the breath of the south wind of God upon his people everywhere, that those who name the name of Christ may be quickened into that devotion and spiritual charm that shall make them an efficient army of the Most High to win the world to Christ.

But when we speak of the Church as a whole, we must not forget that it is made up of men and women such as we, and we give to it the tone and spirit which are to be its manifested life. If the quickening Spirit of God is to transform the Church, it must transform us. No one of us can ever come to the full stature of the whole personality which God sees is possible for us unless we allow the divine fire to burn with a free draft in our hearts. Great Christian experience, supreme surrender to God, so that devotion to Christ and his cause burns at white heat, have always been preliminary to the noblest work that men have done for others.

Perhaps during his visit to America you saw Hugh Price Hughes, that flaming evangel of

Methodist missions in London, who set England on fire with the evangelistic spirit and left all Christianity on earth poorer when God took him home. His biographer tells us that there came into the life of Hughes a time like Pentecost in spiritual baptism and power and that that glorious Christian experience was "the prelude of a singular bursting forth of his mental powers. The opening of the doors of the spirit was also that of the mind."

I was reading recently the story of that gifted missionary, Pilkington, of Uganda. It seems that, after his first experience among the heathen in Africa, he lost heart, and, seeing the futility of his preaching and the poor results of the Christian work in Uganda, he came to the conclusion that he would give up his work and return home. But at the crisis of his depression some unusual circumstances led him to a renewal of his covenant with God and he was brought so close to the divine heart that the south wind of God's Spirit blew warm upon his soul. From that time forth his life was transformed. His work became effectual, and the fruitful years began which ranked him among the greatest of modern missionaries.

It may be that we have undertaken to find the joy and power of the Christian life at the beginning of the path. We have wanted the south wind first in our lives. We would like to have the beauty and charm of the spiritual life without having suffered the cold blasts of winter or the blustering winds of the spring-time, but always the path to spiritual triumph must be by way of the cross. It must be God's way. For every one of us there can be only one true way into the most useful life here and the most joyous life hereafter, and that must be by surrendering our lives completely to the guidance and discipline of our heavenly Father.

"I ask'd the Lord that I might grow
In faith, and love, and every grace;
Might more of his salvation know,
And seek more earnestly his face.

"I hoped that in some favored hour
At once he'd answer my request,
And, by his love's constraining power,
Subdue my sins and give me rest.

"Instead of that, he made me feel
The hidden evils of my heart,
And let the angry powers of hell
Assault my soul in every part.

"'Lord, why is this?' I trembling cried,
'Wilt thou pursue a worm to death?'
''Tis in this way,' the Lord replied,
'I answer prayer for grace and faith.

"'These inward trials I employ
From self and sin to set thee free:
To break thy scheme of earthly joy
That thou mayst seek thy all in me.' "

THE WHIRLWINDS OF LIFE

"Then Jehovah answered Job out of the whirlwind."—Job 38: 1.

THE whirlwind is used in the Bible as a description of an event or as an illustrative figure twenty-six times. It sets forth three distinct ideas, the first of which is illustrated in our text. It is the climax of the story of Job. For a long time Job had lived a quiet life of great prosperity and peace. We see toward the close of each summer what happens in nature after a long continuance of sunshine and calm. The air grows stagnant and quivers with heat and is sluggish with humidity. The whole earth groans in pain and unrest in such an atmosphere. Then comes the whirling storm with its forked lightning and its roaring thunder and its downpour of rain, and the air is purified and cleansed. So in the life of Job—the prosperous man settles down

upon himself in complacency and goes his selfish way. A good man, it may be, but good for little in his sluggishness. Then there comes the whirlwind with its storm and tempest which makes him uncomfortable, and breaks his rest, and shocks him into a new attitude toward life. The storm purifies the atmosphere of his soul, rouses him from his selfishness, braces up his energies, and makes him a blessing to others and a grander, truer man in his own nature.

I. Some people can never understand God's treatment of Job because their idea of God and of goodness is that the one is a goody-goody sort of personality and the other a sort of jellyfish characteristic. It is strange how people build up an idea of the Divine Being as a personality without common sense and without intelligent vigor. The God of the universe, the God of the Bible, is a God who delights in surprizes, who rejoices in doing things in interesting and unique ways. That is why nature and all life is so interesting—we do not know exactly what is going to happen. We know that certain great laws run through everything, but no man can prophesy what interesting phases are going to come up in God's deal-

ings with him or with his neighbor. And if you will permit me to say it reverently, that is what makes God so interesting. Gerald Stanley Lee says, with a good deal of insight, that we do not naturally think of goodness as having much of lunge to it; we think of it as tired-looking and discouraged and pulling back kindly and gently. Now I think God is not interested in that kind of goodness. You like the men and women with whom you have to do to be reliable and worthy to be depended upon, but at the same time they are infinitely more interesting to you if there is forever springing up in their conversation and in their conduct unexpected things which you had not foreseen. So God makes the world interesting by the infinite diversity of his nature and by the various ways in which he expresses it in his providence and dealings with us.

God speaks to men and women in many ways. He does not always speak in the whirlwind. He spoke to Adam and Eve in the garden of Eden in the quiet stillness of the night, when their sin had made them afraid. He spoke to Jacob in the dreams of midnight, when his soul was lonely in his exile. He spoke

to Samuel in the old temple in the days of his childish innocence. He spoke to Elijah in the whirlwind and the tempest, but his voice was not heard—it was not heard until by the still, small voice he communed with the rugged man in the quiet mountain cave. But Job needed a whirlwind to rouse him to the full power of his nature, and out of the whirlwind God was able to call him to his best self.

God is speaking to every one of us. Some of us hear. Some go with deaf ears and know not that God is in the earth. Many are blinded by the material things of the world. They grope along, hunting for this world's bribes. They are like Balaam before his eyes were opened to see the angel of God with the sharp sword in his hand. When Balaam saw him he cried out in amazement, "I knew not thou stoodest in the way against me." So sometimes God stands in the way to talk with us and to give us his message and we will not listen, we will not see. Let us pray that he may be able to attract our attention, tho it require a whirlwind to do so.

For a long time Job could not find God in the experiences of his life. He cried aloud,

"O that I knew where I might find him!" He found him in the whirlwind of loss and disaster and pain and suffering; but he found him, and finding him found the cure for his woes and the answer to all his cries. How foolish we are when we imagine that mere things can make us happy and glad or that the absence of them can make us miserable.

At one of the Northfield Conferences a few years ago a missionary who had returned from the interior of Africa told a story that stirred the heart of every listener. He said he began his work there with companions as eager as himself. One by one they all gave way before the terrible climate. Three of them he buried. The others he took to the coast and sent home. Then he turned back, to stand utterly alone in the midst of hundreds of thousands of men, women and children who had never heard the name of Christ. Again and again he tramped the distant plains with his tongue so swollen that he could not speak. Thirty times he was stricken by fever, with no one to care for him. Lions attacked him, natives ambushed him; he had lived upon everything—from ants to rhinoceroses. And here was his conclusion:

"I know the great joy of walking with Jesus Christ in the midst of all this. I stand ready at this moment to go through it all again for the joy I have found in flashing the word 'Savior' into the darkness of a great tribe. Is it God's will? That makes the wilderness a garden. That makes the desert glow with the very presence of God."

Let us not miss the great secret of the story of Job and of this missionary—nothing can make life small and poor if the soul itself holds communion with heaven. No circumstance is powerful enough to defeat a soul which is aflame with the love of God and the love of man.

There was an Englishman names James Smetham, an artist and a poet, whose work, however, never gave him popularity or success as the world counts them. Yet toward the end of his life he wrote:

"In my own secret heart I look upon myself as one who has got on, and got to his goal, as one who has got something a thousand times better than a fortune, more real, more inward, less in the power of others, less variable, more immortal; more eternal; as one whose feet are on a rock, his goings established, with a new song in his mouth, and a new joy in his heart."

A man like that can realize the poet's song:

"There is a sea—a quiet sea,
Beyond the farthest line,
Where all my ships that went astray,
Where all my dreams of yesterday,
And all the things that were to be—
Are mine!

"There is a land—a quiet land,
Beyond the setting sun,
Where every task in which I quailed,
And all wherein my courage failed,
Where all the good my spirit planned
Is done!

"There is a hope—a quiet hope,
Within my heart instilled,
That if, undaunted, on I sail,
This guiding star shall never pale,
But shine within my labor's scope,
Fulfilled!

"And there's a tide—a quiet tide,
Flowing toward a goal—
That sweeps by every humble shore
And at its fullest ebbs no more;
And on that final swell shall ride—
My soul!"

II. The second idea around which clusters by far the largest number of these Biblical references to the whirlwind is the great fact that sin and folly always breed the whirlwind

of punishment and disaster in God's universe. The prophet Hosea voices the theology of all of them when he exclaims of some people who have turned away from God and gone after foolish idols, and have been broken on the wheel of their own folly, "They have sown the wind, and they shall reap the whirlwind." The Bible is full of illustrations of men who have done that. You see Samson, the young Hebrew giant, with his marvelous gift of physical strength which made him such a great benediction to his people in dark and trying times, sowing the wind of his folly in the house of Delilah until at last he reaps the whirlwind as a poor slave, the plaything and sport of the Philistines as he works like an ox in the mill of his enemies.

We have a picturesque and striking illustration of the intervention of God in the destruction of a man who fights against him in the case of Sisera. Sisera was the Napoleon of his day—a brilliant soldier with the most splendidly equipped army of his time, and he came against Israel with war chariots and wonderful artillery. Now Barak, the natural leader of God's people, was a coward who

dared not go out to fight against him. Then rose Deborah, the prophetess of the Lord, one of the great women of all the centuries. She was a personality, a great soul with such faith in God that she dared whatever he called on her to do. And she rose up and sought to shame Barak into action. The whining fellow said, "I'll go if you'll go with me." And she said, "You'll get no honor for such conduct. God will sell Sisera into the hand of a woman, and you will lose your chance for honor." But what does a coward care for that? And so Deborah led the army to victory, and it was she who sings of that intervention of God in the great whirlwind of electric storm that turned Sisera's war horses into panic, and washed away his artillery, and sent him defeated, flying to his death. Brave, glorious Deborah! Singing about it she says, "They fought from heaven; the stars in their courses fought against Sisera." So the stars in their courses always fight against sin and make the ultimate victory impossible to the sinner.

III. The third distinct idea where the whirlwind is used as an illustration is in the story which is told us of the translation of Elijah,

in the Second Book of Kings. The historian says of it that the day came when the Lord would take up Elijah into heaven by a whirlwind, and that there appeared a chariot of fire and horses of fire, and they drove in between Elijah and Elisha as they walked along the road, parting them from each other; "and Elijah went up by a whirlwind into heaven." Here the whirlwind is used to illustrate God's surprizing intervention to bless, doing honor to his faithful servant in a most unexpected manner.

Three ascensions to the skies are recorded. The first was that of Enoch, a man who in a dark age walked with God, and "he was not, for God took him." But before his translation, "he had this testimony, that he pleased God." We have no other description of the translation of Enoch, and we do not know whether it was visible to the world or not.

The ascension of Jesus after his resurrection is naturally suggested to us by this part of our theme. We are told that our Savior, after appearing many times to his disciples and to others during the forty days following his resurrection, finally led them out as far as

Bethany, and that there, after giving them his blessing, he was parted from them. There were no chariots of angels, no flaming horsemen; but gradually the Savior began to ascend, and as they watched him he was lost to their view in the clouds, and as their hearts grew tender and the tears filled their eyes, two angels stood by them and comforted them with these words: "Ye men of Galilee, why stand ye gazing up into heaven? This same Jesus, which is taken up from you into heaven, shall so come in like manner as ye have seen him go into heaven."

Between the two, Enoch and Jesus, we have this scene of the ascension of Elijah.

There is an interesting contrast between the translation of Enoch and Elijah and the ascension of Jesus. Of Enoch it is said that "God took him"; of Elijah, that God sent his chariot and horsemen and angelic guard to carry him up to heaven. But how different the ascension of Christ. Jesus was simply going home from whence he came. He needed no whirlwind nor chariot of fire to carry him back to his throne in heaven. Calmly, slowly, as if borne upward by a natural gravitation toward the skies, he

went thither, his hands outreached in blessing. His angelic guard did not need to surround him, clad in fiery armor. He needed that no more than did the one with a face like lightning who rolled back the stone from the sepulchre and before whose dazzling countenance the Roman soldiers fell like dead men. But clad in white apparel, the emblem of purity and peace, these angelic servants of Jesus remained behind by the weeping disciples to comfort them with hope.

There is a message in Elijah's whirlwind for every one of us. We are all walking toward eternity. Every step we take brings the end nearer. None of us knows how long our journey will be here, but we do know that every day's journey and every step we take on that journey brings the end closer. Some of us have traveled a long way already, and know that we have not much farther to go, and yet some who have gone but a short distance may be still closer to the end than we. We are going right on like Elijah and Elisha, walking and talking, when suddenly, it may be without an hour's time to prepare for the change, God will call for us, and we must go to meet our

Lord. Are we ready for it? If as you go home to-day, death should come to you out of the side street, as you turn the corner, and you should meet there "the pale horse and his rider" to summon you from earth to stand before God, are you ready? If not, if your heart shrinks back with fear at such a thought, then I urge upon you the wisdom of making ready now, and that you do not wait another hour before, through obedience to God and active faith in Jesus Christ your Savior, you become reconciled to God, so that you will be ready, as Elijah was, for such a call.

If we have Christ as our Savior, our friend, our pilot, we need never be afraid of any call, however suddenly it may come upon us. The poet asks:

"Who is the Pilot, into whose sure hand
Waiting the summons as the day grows dark,
Upon the border of this earthly strand,
We may commit our barque?

"Can Reason rule the deck, and firmly steer
Through depths where swirling maelstroms rave and [roar,
And madly threaten to o'erwhelm us, ere
We reach the thither shore?

"Has calm Philosophy, whose lore unrolls
The axioms of the ages, ever found
A perfect chart to map what rocks and shoals
Beset the outward bound?

"Can Science guide, that with exploring glass
Sweeps the horizon of the restless tide,
And questions, 'mid the mists that so harass,
'Is there a farther side?'

"Dare old Tradition set its untrimmed light
Upon the prow, and hope to show the way
Through gulfing troughs that blinder make the night,
Out into perfect day?

"Nay, none of these are strong to mount the deck,
And, with authority assured and free,
Guide onward, fearless of the loss and wreck
That crowd this soundless sea.

"O ye who watch the ebbing tide—what saith
The wisdom that through ages hath sufficed
For questioning souls?—The only chart is faith;
The only Pilot, Christ."

THE NEED OF A RED-BLOODED CHRISTIANITY

"Blessed be the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, who according to his great mercy begat us again unto a living hope by the resurrection of Jesus Christ from the dead."—1 Peter 1:3.

PETER has caught here preeminently the secret of the Christian life. Phillips Brooks once said to his people: "I exhort you to pray for fulness of life—full red blood in the body, full and honest truth in the mind, fulness of consecrated love to the dying Savior in the heart."

I. Now Peter assures us that the beginning of this red-blooded Christianity is in God as its source. He who is the source of all vitality is the only source great enough, inexhaustible enough, to be the Father of a vital Christian life that can triumph over all difficulties, bear up under all burdens, keep its faith against all disappointments, and face the problems of

the present and the future with growing courage.

The soul of a man harks back to God in all the great emergencies of life. Some years ago in one of our Southern States a little child wandered away from its home and was lost in a great swamp. When the news was heralded through the neighborhood, the people came from far and near, until two or three hundred were searching for the little wanderer. The swamp was full of stagnant pools and poisonous serpents, and every friendly heart in all the company was full of tenderest anxiety for the lost child. When the darkness of night fell, the search was kept up with lanterns and torches of pitchwood, and at last in a regular, systematic manner they covered the entire swamp at short distances apart. Just before daybreak one of the parties came to the foot of a great tree beside which lay the child, half-starved, half-frozen, scared almost to death, and so feeble that it could scarcely cry. When it saw the company of searchers, it was frightened at first, and looked up in the face of the strangers and said: "I want my father." And that is the cry of a frightened world in all the

great emergencies of life. The heart of man cries out to God. Consciously or unconsciously, men everywhere are searching after God as a source of the real life which we crave.

Peter declares that that full life is begotten within us by our heavenly Father through the resurrection of Jesus Christ. These words remind us of Paul's expression of the supreme longing of his soul—that he might come to know Christ so well that he should know "the power of his resurrection." Robert Speer, in one of his Northfield addresses, declared that such a knowledge transfuses new life into the veins of the soul. The Christian life is not a matter of saying: "I have been a liar; I will not lie any more": "I have stolen; I will not steal any more": or, "I have committed sin; I will not sin any more." Rather, it is opening up all the doors of the personality to the incoming of the risen Christ, with power to do in the life what our wills can never do, what the influence of friends by the power of association can never accomplish, and what can be accomplished only as the supernatural life of God comes pouring through the lives of men. And this is what Paul means, for as we look

through his letters we find that Dr. Jowett sees truly when he finds Paul seeing all things set to work to make him unconquerable when this new hope of the risen Christ had once possest him. Everything had a new meaning after that. Love exprest more than a relationship. It was an energy productive of abundant labors. Faith was more than an attitude of the mind. It was an energy that set a man's whole life into action. Hope was more than a cheerful posing of the heart. It was, as Peter saw it, a living, vital, pulsing reality, sustaining a most enduring patience. And if you look through Paul's writings you will see how in his vision of the Christian life everything is at work to give the Christian success. The Holy Spirit worketh! Grace worketh! Faith worketh! Hope worketh! Prayer worketh! And those things which we naturally think of as enemies, even they, get a friendly look on their faces when once this living hope inspires the soul. And so we hear Paul shouting: "Tribulation worketh!" "This light affliction worketh!" "Godly sorrow worketh!" Until it seems to Paul, as it did to Elisha at Dothan,

that "the mountain is full of horses and chariots of fire round about him."

There is this comfort about the spiritual life —our triumph does not mean another's failure, our wealth does not mean another's poverty. The same forces that work together for our good are working together for the good of every other man or woman who loves God.

What we need to do, in order to bring heaven to earth, is to bring the spirit of the higher realm into dominance in the daily life we live, until the prayer Jesus taught is answered: "Thy will be done on earth as it is in heaven."

Dr. George Macdonald, the poet-novelist who sought to live in that spirit, sings:

"The Man who was Lord of fate,
Born in an ox's stall,
Was great, because he was much too great
To care about greatness at all.

"Ever and only he sought
The will of his Father-good;
Never of what was high he thought,
But what his Father would.

"You long to be great; you try,
You feel yourself smaller still;
In the name of God let ambition die,
Let him make you what he will."

II. With such a vivid picture of the normal Christian life—for Peter and Paul are not talking about angels, nor special saints, nor heroes, but about the natural, healthy, normal Christian life possible for all of us—with such a life within our reach, nothing could be more inconsistent than the anemic lives which sometimes bear the Christian name. How pitiful it is to listen to some of the weak and apologizing expressions concerning one's feeling toward God and Christ on the lips of many Christian men and women. Ask a man if he is a Christian, and with timid doubtfulness he says, "I hope so"—as tho he were afraid to let himself go in complete acceptance and joyous appreciation of the love of God in Jesus Christ. Some people seem to be afraid to accept Christianity at its full and let their hearts revel in it. They are all the while holding a sort of post-mortem over themselves and their experiences lest they should believe something too good to be true. Henry Ward Beecher once said that a man might just as well, in that benign and blessed hour when the soul is certain of love and of being loved, tear himself to pieces by an analysis of his experiences and

say: "I do think I love her, but let me see, what is love? I ought to analyze that matter, and I ought not to allow myself to be mistaken in that thing. Is it a going forth of my will benevolently toward her, or is it simply the admiration of her form and comeliness? What is it?" Such a man is a fool on a gridiron. If a man does not know that he is in love, or whether he is or not, it is pretty sure evidence that he is not. So when I ask a man, "Is it your purpose to serve God?" and he hesitates and stammers and says: "Well, I hope it is," I am amazed and indignant. If a man were to sit down at my table and I offered him a delicious bunch of grapes, or a rarely flavored peach, and I said to him, "Do you relish that peach?" and he were to answer diffidently, "Well, I humbly hope that I do," I should be greatly tempted to give him a red pepper and find out whether he enjoyed that or not. My friend, if you are living an anemic life like that, there is something the matter with your religion, and in its present condition it is worthless to you, and must be worthless to the world. We know that it is displeasing to Christ. In the Book of Revelation he expresses himself

about some people who are living colorless lives like yours and says of them that they are neither cold nor hot, but are tasteless and lukewarm, and he declares that for that reason he will spit them out. God forbid that such a judgment shall be pronounced on our lives by our divine Master.

III. This vital Christian hope which God begets in us by the resurrection of Christ is not narrow and personal—for ourselves alone—but is for humanity. A man can not truly believe and realize that Jesus Christ is his Savior, not only pardoning his sins but lifting him out of sin—out of its bondage and its fear into a new life of courage and goodness—without believing that Jesus Christ is also the Savior of other men, and that what has come to him is possible for others. And there is born with that faith a desire to help bring about the salvation of others who are in a condition of sin such as he has known.

This living hope for humanity becomes broader and more splendid as we ourselves become more enlightened and illuminated. As we look back over the history of mankind we see that God has dealt with us as with children,

and in the times of men's ignorance God winked at many things that afterward were recognized as deadly sins, because men knew better and their hope for humanity had grown larger. The Christianity of the past looks narrow to us as we look back. Not very long ago large groups of Christians were sustaining slavery by quoting the Bible and praying God's blessing on themselves while they held their fellow men in bondage. God seemed to them to answer their prayers for blessing until sufficient illumination came to make slavery impossible with the blessing of God upon the man who practised it. Only a little while ago intemperate people who both sold and drank liquor and gave it to others without question expected the blessing of God upon themselves and received it, and God used them until the light became too bright and men knew too much, and the hope for humanity became too broad a thing to make it longer possible for a man not to understand his duty toward his neighbor in this regard. And it is no longer possible for the blessing of God to be upon a church, in this country at least, and for God to use it for the salvation of men, if it is not

true on the question of strong drink. Only a little while ago there was but a little group here and there among Christian people who took any interest in foreign missions, and the burden of the great heathen world was scarcely felt by the churches; but to-day "the living hope," like yeast in the midst of the meal of Christendom, has so permeated the whole that no church is being used of God in any blessed way in the salvation of men if it is not helping to bear the gospel to the benighted tribes of the world.

We are coming to the time, perhaps we are already there, when every Christian Church in America shall lose its vital power, its consciousness of the presence of God, and its efficiency in winning men to Christ, if it fails to labor for economic justice to the great mass of working men and women. Things that seemed right a hundred years ago, or fifty years ago, or even twenty-five years ago, we are coming to recognize now as wrong. We are coming to know to-day that large classes of our fellow men have not had their fair chance, and the world of toilers is demanding something definite—a mere vague, undefined sympathy will

no longer be accepted. The day has come for a wider hope for humanity. Justice must be done, and it must begin at the house of God. Christian men and women must dare to believe all the promises of God for themselves, and have as large and as splendid a hope for the poorest man and woman in the community as they have for their own souls. The pulpit and the Christian Church as a whole must feel more keenly the pulsations of this living hope in Jesus Christ for all men.

The Rev. J. E. Rattenbury, one of the younger and one of the most brilliant of Wesleyan preachers, on whom the mantle of Hugh Price Hughes seems to have fallen, recently referred to Holman Hunt's great picture, "The Light of the World," and said he would like to see a companion picture painted by some great artist. It should show a noble church with the front door partly open, so that any one could see the gorgeousness and the glory of the place, enriched by all that art and civilization could do. Then he would like to see the people in the church kneeling and praying with their faces toward the altar. Outside, he would have placed three pathetic figures—the

fallen woman in all her wretchedness and misery; the beggar in his dirt and filth; and the slum child. Above this picture he would put the same text as there is above Holman Hunt's, "Behold I stand at the door and knock," but at the bottom. "Inasmuch as ye have done it unto one of the least of these my brethren, ye have done it unto me." "For that," says Mr. Rattenbury, "is the way that Jesus Christ knocks at the Church's door to-day."

One Sunday night Dr. Len Broughton was preaching to a large congregation on "Heaven" and was enjoying it hugely, and all the people seemed to be happy, when suddenly his eyes lighted on four members of the city council sitting side by side in the congregation, listening to his talk about heaven. The moment he saw those men he forgot all about heaven. He remembered at once that a few days prior to that there was before that very body of which they were members a proposition for better sewerage in a certain tenement section of the city where there was raging at that time an epidemic of typhoid fever that was killing the poor people like flies. And Broughton himself had appeared with a com-

mittee before that city council and made a plea for those dying people and urged proper sanitation to stop the dreadful rage of fever that took them away every year by the score. These men had turned it down and had appropriated the money asked for this purpose to beautify a section of the city where the rich lived. Broughton said it was impossible to talk about heaven in the face of a situation like that, and he changed the course of his sermon and poured out his heart in behalf of a little bit of heaven in the city where they lived. When he was through preaching, a pious Christian woman with diamonds in her ears and on her fingers, took him by the hand and said: "I am awfully sorry that you got off of your subject. If I had known you were going to talk like that, I would have stayed at home." Broughton said, "Why?" "Oh, you are so much more powerful when you preach the gospel, the dear gospel." He answered, "Don't you think I was preaching the gospel?" "No, I don't. You have no right to talk like that when you preach the gospel from the pulpit." And Broughton turned to her and said: "Sister, when it comes to a pass that the thing I have

been talking about is not the gospel, and I am sure of it, I am going to tear my Bible up, and resign my commission as a preacher, and turn my back upon the whole business, and give my time to something that will work." And then she turned to him and said, "But it looks so much like a fight." "Well," said he, "don't you think we ought to be up and at it, as a fight? Did not our Lord say, 'I came not to bring peace on earth, but a sword?' And what have we a sword for? Just to dangle by our sides? We are not on dress parade; we are in service to fight."

And I say to you that in my judgment great evangelistic power in winning souls to Christ will come, and can come, only to those churches that are living up to their light and illumination in doing their utmost properly to represent Jesus Christ in bringing about brotherly justice and righteousness to the souls in the wages and social and hygienic conditions of men and women. The Socialist is right when he says that conditions make men. The Individualist is equally right when he insists that men make conditions. The work of the Christian Church is with the individual, but with the individual

always as a unit in a social order. The work of the Church is with personal character, but with character defined in terms of social usefulness. The Church must plead for better conditions in the world that we may have better men; and she must plead for better men that our conditions may be so improved that modern society may be redeemed and multitudes of ignorant, starved souls catch a glimpse of that living hope which is our own joyous heritage.

IV. Our own growing vitality as Christians —the greatness of our own spiritual personality—is conditioned on activity in following the vision which God gives us in this great, living hope for the world. No man ever yet came to his greatest by consciously cultivating himself or taking care of himself or centering his efforts on himself. The secret of the largest, happiest, noblest life is in forgetting oneself in the cherishing of interests that belong to others. If a man can absorb himself in some cause that is great enough to draw out his whole soul in trying to add to the cheer and comfort and inspiration of those who have been weak and unfortunate, then he himself has

found the path to the greatest life. The hero in a beautiful modern story says:

"Our dear ones die; our affairs get tangled; our powers wane; health and youth are spent; the hearing dulls, the eye weakens; it may be a losing game. But when one's interests are concentrated on something bigger than the immediate personal career, upon the social good, it is possible to be eternally, youthfully happy. No selfish idling can bring it, no dangling in museums and libraries, no aimless wandering by the mountains or the sea, no selfish pursuit of any kind whatever. It comes only through human service, and human sympathy, and human outreaching toward that which is eternal and divine."

Here is the open secret of true greatness and supreme joy. Ethel Carnie has found the fountain of immortal youth for which the Spanish adventurer sought so long ago when she sings:

"Wide open stands the door of my soul,
And the world's men and women troop through;
Some weeping, some laughing, some dumb with [despair,
Wearing roses, and fennel, and rue;
And the beat of their feet makes a martial refrain—
Come in, I am waiting for you.

"Wide open stands the door of my soul,
And the victor and vanquished tramp in;
Come the makers of music immortal and sweet,
Come the stirrers of conflict and din;
And their voices sound loud as the roar of the sea—
O voices, I bid you come in.

"I can not shut the door of my soul;
Through the day and the night they pour through!
O women and men, I can ne'er sit alone,
For my fate is all mixed up with you!
I must laugh to the end with the young and the gay,
I must weep with the wearers of rue."

AN ARTESIAN WELL OF JOY

"Whom having not seen, ye love; on whom, though now ye see him not, yet believing, ye rejoice greatly with joy unspeakable and full of glory."—1 Peter 1: 8.

"JOY" is a much greater word than "happiness." It is a much richer word, and far more comprehensive. Take the words "happiness," "pleasure," "glad," "delighted," "enchanted," "charmed," and a dozen other words like them, put them in a test tube with the proper solvent of spiritual desire, and you will get as a solution this word "joy." Dr. Howard Bushnell says that happiness is that which happens or comes by outward befalling. You may sometimes buy it with money, or inherit it from social position, or win it by exertion; but joy is not for sale in any market, and no man can bequeath it by will or achieve it by self-devotion. It must spring from what he is in his inner life and thought and purpose. Joy is so great a grace that it is sometimes

born of sorrow. Paul said that he joyed in tribulations.

Joy is not only possible out of present experience, but is often prospective concerning experiences that are to come. Once in a great zoological garden I saw a flock of young flamingoes. They looked like a band of rubber tubes stretching up out of as many downy covered water bottles on stilts. They were so ugly that they were interesting; the thought of beauty never could have suggested itself to any one who knew nothing about a flamingo. But after awhile, when they grew their wings and found themselves, and were gorgeously clothed in their marvelously colored feathers, if you had seen them flying in the sun you would have thought them a floating rainbow, fresh from the studio of God. So Christian joy comes sometimes from the fledglings of trial. So Peter suggests, in connection with our text, "Wherein ye greatly rejoice, though now for a little while, if need be, ye have been put to grief in manifold trials, that the proof of your faith, being more precious than gold that perisheth though it is proved by fire, may be found unto praise and glory and honor

at the revelation of Jesus Christ: whom not having seen ye love; on whom, though now ye see him not, yet believing, ye rejoice greatly with joy unspeakable and full of glory."

I. As we study this paragraph we see that in Peter's vision the Christian's joy does not depend upon outward things, but upon the deep spiritual relationship which we have with God through Jesus Christ. In some parts of the West and Southwest the settlers do not depend on local rainfall or snowfall for the watering of their crops, neither do they depend on the streams that flow on the surface for irrigation; they bore deep down into the heart of the earth and tap rivers which have their source in the heart of the Rocky Mountains far away out of sight. From these hidden, inexhaustible resources they draw the refreshing streams necessary to water the earth and make the desert a very garden of the Lord. It is thus that the Christian must find his joy. He must get it from hidden currents that flow from spiritual relationship with Jesus Christ. The surface streams can never be depended upon to give us abiding joy.

I have seen a story of Charles Matthews,

who was the greatest English comedian of his day, who used to keep the great city of London in an atmosphere of healthy humor for months at a time. On one occasion he was worn out in body and brain, a victim of the sad despair which he had driven out of the lives of so many of his admirers. While in this condition he called on an English specialist for medical treatment, exclaiming: "Doctor, what can you do for me? I am so sad. It almost seems to me, at times, that my heart will break." The famous physician made a most thorough examination, and, not knowing the professional character of his patient, innocently remarked: "My advice to you is to go and hear Matthews, Charles Matthews. What you need, man, is a laugh, a hearty laugh. Hear Matthews. His humor will act as a tonic on your soul. What you need is laughter—not medicine." "Ah," said the poor nerve-racked comedian, "I am Charles Matthews." We need to realize deeply that true joy comes from within, that the secret of joy, genuine joy, is to find God in Jesus Christ, for only there can we find a source of joy that can never be exhausted.

I recently heard an interesting story of a

man who had his house wired for electricity but so far had used it only in connection with a battery installed for the purpose of ringing various bells throughout the house. He did not know very much about electricity, and he fancied that if a battery could ring a bell it could make a light, and so he proceeded to run the wires from the battery up into his office. Then he adjusted a globe in the fashion of an electric light, turned on the current, and was greatly disappointed to find that he got no light. About that time a practical electrician came in, and seeing that he was in trouble about something, he said, "What is the matter?" "I don't know. I have a battery here that has been ringing all the bells for a long time, and it has never failed me. So I thought that this battery that could ring bells so well could light my office. I tried and failed." The electrician looked at him and said, "Don't you know that it takes much more power to make a light than it does to make a noise?" I think there are a good many people who need to learn that. One can get power enough from physical and worldly sources to make a good deal of outward show of religious form and

ceremony, but when it comes to that true joy which gives radiant gladness to the heart and buoyancy to the courage to face with confidence the struggles of every-day life, there must be a genuine connection between our hearts and the heart of God. There must be a vital battery constantly charged from the central spiritual battery of the universe. The man who has that connection will, like Paul, find joy even in the midst of pain and sorrow and tribulation, and remain undaunted in the face of certain persecution and death. Nothing can overcome our vital joy so long as there is uninterrupted relation between our hearts and the heart of God in Jesus Christ our Savior.

II. One thing made very clear in the teaching of Jesus and the writers of the New Testament is that if we live the Christ life we shall surely have the Christ joy. Christ said to those friends who loved him when he was here on earth that his joy should remain in them to make their joy full. One commentator says that Jesus Christ, having such resources of joy in his own nature, communicates to us his own character of love and his own resources of joy.

The word that signifies love in the original of the New Testament is radically one with that which signifies joy. According to the family registers of that language, they are twins of the same birth. Love is joy, and all true joy is love.

To enter into the fulness of Christian joy we must really live the Christlike life. I was reading recently the brilliant discussion of a virile-minded man who says that true poetry is the sublimated and purified essence of life. He also declares that real music is emotion breaking into rhythm as a wave breaks into foam and sound. There has never been an age of great poetry, he says (and I think history will bear him out), that was not first an age of great action, great thought, great living. You can no more have lovely blossomings without hidden roots than you can have great poetry or music without a proportionate experience out of which they spring. You could not have love songs without the passion of a man and woman out of which they are born. Homer could never have sung without the inspiration of the heroes who inspired him. The psalms of David were born of the yearnings, the aspi-

rations, the triumphant joy in God to which they give utterance. And as there could be no love songs without love, nor could they be sung but for the love they reawaken in hearts that listen, and no heroic poems without heroic lives, no psalms without the faith that soars above the conflict and the struggle until it breaks in triumph, so there can be no deep, abiding, up-springing stream of spiritual joy that will feed our souls with inspiration and confidence without the experience of devoted, Christlike living on our part. But given that, the Christian is largely independent of those surface streams of joy which are the worldly man's only resource. Some one sings of the man whose type is known to every one of us:

"He kept his soul unspotted
As he went upon his way,
And he tried to do some service
For God's people day by day;
He had time to cheer the doubter
Who complained that hope was dead;
He had time to help the cripple
When the way was rough ahead;
He had time to guard the orphan, and
One day, well satisfied
With the talents God had given him, he
Closed his eyes and died.

"He had time to see the beauty
That the Lord spread all around;
He had time to hear the music
In the shells the children found;
He had time to keep repeating
As he bravely worked away:
'It is splendid to be living
In the splendid world to-day.'
But the crowds—the crowds that hurry
After golden prizes—said
That he never had succeeded,
When the clods lay o'er his head—
He had dreamed—he was a failure,
They compassionately sighed.
For the man had little money
In his pockets when he died."

Who of us is so poor in rich treasures of memory that we have not known some of God's saints who lived and died without much money in their pockets, who never seemed to score great success as the noisy world registers such things, but whose lives were so full of good cheer and quiet, loving helpfulness that the joy God gave them somehow watered and sweetened many a desert field along the way of life for all who came in touch with them.

III. It is, I think, the supreme glory of our Christianity that this noble Christian joy is not for special cases and spiritual geniuses under unusual conditions only, but for common men

in the commonplace experiences of the life of every day. A dear old Christian woman in talking to a young woman who had come to her for counsel, recalled the story of Christ's friends who had fished all night and caught nothing, and yet Jesus asked them to put down their net on the other side of the boat right where they were, and they took many fish. "Did you ever notice," said the old lady, smiling into the troubled face before her, "that the Lord told them to try again right in the same place where they had worked all night without success?" If we could only go off to some new place every time we get discouraged, trying again would be an easier thing. If we could be somebody else, or go somewhere else, or do something else, it might not be hard to have fresh faith and courage; but it is the same old net in the same old pond for most of us. The old temptations are to be overcome, the old faults reconquered, the old trials and discouragements before which we failed yesterday to be faced again to-day. We must win success where we are, if we are to win at all. And the greatest triumph is possible right where we are, not through changed conditions

about us but through a change in us, by our becoming more perfectly related with Jesus Christ. If only we can manage to surrender our whole selves to the hands of Jesus, anything good enough to be true is possible, right where we are in our lives.

One night three men, overtaken by a storm in the Adirondacks, sought admission to a little log hut which they came upon in the woods. There lived in this hut a hermit, a man who had been disappointed in politics and love and had become embittered with the world; he had withdrawn from human associations and fellowship, and the three men who entered his hut received scant welcome. When the evening meal was over, and they sat before the fire, one of the strangers noticed a violin on the shelf, which he wanted to play. The hermit at first rudely declined to give him this privilege, but at last, being over-persuaded, placed it in his hands, and the stranger drew his bow across the strings and played some old familiar tunes, such as "Home, Sweet Home" and "Nearer, My God, to Thee" and "Annie Laurie." At the conclusion the hermit was sobbing like a child. He rose and took the old

violin solemnly in his hands, replacing it on the shelf, and said, "After this, I shall never play it again, for I am not worthy." The violin was old, it was really out of tune, but the player of the violin was Ole Bull, the master musician of his day. The magic power was not in the instrument, but in the genius which wrought upon it. So you and I may have been warped and marred by many things, left to ourselves we may give out much of strife and discord; but if we can only yield ourselves to that great Master Musician of the human soul, who knew what was in man and knows us better than Ole Bull knew the violin, the strife and discord shall cease, and the great deeps of our souls shall be brought into such harmony with Christ and be kept so continually under his influence and skill that the joy that shall throb there, and sing there, shall find its way into our daily conversation and life, so that others will be charmed by the evidences of Christian love and experience shown by our conduct. How much sweeter the circle that surrounds us will be if we can live with the sunshine of Christ's face shining into our common days. If we will take the gifts that are

common to us every day as tho they were fresh gifts from God, and let a new song spring out of them in every new day's experience, it will not only gladden our own lives but inspire the little circle that is closest to us. Some humble poet has a little creed which would, I think, be good for every one of us to-day to make our own:

"Let me be a little kinder,
Let me be a little blinder
To the faults of those about me,
Let me pray a little more;
Let me be, when I am weary,
Just a little bit more cheery,
Let me serve a little better,
Those that I am striving for.

"Let me be a little braver,
When temptation bids me waver,
Let me strive a little harder
To be all that I should be:
Let me be a little meeker
With the brother that is weaker,
Let me think more of my neighbor
And a little less of me."

IV. It is not hard to test ourselves and make sure whether our chief joy is Christian or not. If it is really Christian joy, it will be in harmony, be of the same sort, as the joy of our Lord. That was a terrible thing which Kip-

ling said about Matthew Arnold when he heard of the poet's death: "He won't like God." If we do not like God, then our joy is not Christian. But if we have entered into such fellowship with Jesus Christ that we love him with grateful appreciation, then we will rejoice in the same things that make him glad.

Jesus found his meat and drink in doing the things that needed doing in order to relieve the burdens on poor, neglected and oppressed human beings. At the well of Sychar, when a conversation with a sinful woman whom he had been able to awaken to spiritual things had fed him so that his hunger had vanished, he said, "My meat and my drink is to do the will of him that sent me." Is that the food on which you live? In the land of Gadara a poor outcast who was so devil-ridden he could not live at home was the man in whom Jesus was most interested. It was as tho he should come to your town and passing by smug, self-complacent souls should devote himself to giving courage to some poor sin-curst cripples. Do you get any food for your soul in that way?

There was a flaming scandal in a town where Jesus was, and a woman accused of grievous

sin was brought before him on her way to be stoned to death. He so interested himself in the poor, hopeless creature that he shamed her accusers into flight and brought hope to her heart and sent her away to sin no more. Do you treat scandal in that way? Do you get food for your joy in deeds like that?

Jesus made childhood the standard of human value, and declared it were better for a man to have a millstone hanged about his neck and that he be cast into the sea than that he should harm a child. Do you find joy in loving and protecting childhood like that? If Jesus were here now, and a procession of weak and hurt and dwarfed and broken and disgraced men and women and children, gathered from all our towns, could pass before him, I can imagine him turning to us and saying, "Inasmuch as ye are ministering to one of the least of these unfortunate ones, ye are ministering unto me." Are you finding the food of your soul in such ministry?

God help us to be honest with our own souls! The Christian religion is no idle form or ceremony, no dry husk of an unused creed, however orthodox. No, the fruits of the Spirit

come of a living tree fed by a life source through roots that strike deep into the very heart of God and feed humanity with the only food that can nourish the souls of men. Jesus brought the love of God into the lives of men. He did not say much about souls as such; he ministered to men and women and children. If they were lepers, he cleansed them; if they were blind, he opened their eyes; if they were deaf, he treated their ears; if they were oppressors, he shamed and thundered them into fear. If they were bowed and shamed by sin, he loved them into repentance.

Men, women, children, rich or poor, learned or ignorant, high or low, good or bad, were to him sons and daughters of God, his brothers, his sisters; to do them good was his supreme joy. Are we like Jesus Christ? Is he our kind of man? If he came to our town, would we flock after him to help or would we criticize him as a visionary and a fanatic? These things of which I have been speaking were his food, his joy, his glory. Are they our joy?

Make another test: Jesus says that there is joy in heaven over one sinner that repenteth, and in that beautiful story of the sheepfold in

Luke's gospel, in which he tells of his own work as the Good Shepherd seeking the lost until he finds it, he represents himself as saying to his friends, when he has found the lost sheep in the dark mountain canyon and brought it back on his shoulder rejoicing, "Rejoice with me; for I have found my sheep that was lost." And so Jesus Christ is calling to his friends to-day concerning every man or woman or child who is won back to him from sin, and he is saying to you again and again and again, "Rejoice with me." Do you rejoice with Jesus over the salvation of the lost?

"Oh, yes," some one says, "I am happy when any of my neighbors or their children become Christians." But we must go farther afield if we are truly to share the joy of Jesus Christ. If you will reread the words of our Lord and the visions he gave to Paul in his man of Macedonia and to Peter on the roof of the friendly tanner's house by the seaside, you will be sure that Jesus is as happy over the great sunrise of hope that comes in the conversion of a Korean or a Chinaman or a Japanese or a Guinea negro or an Eskimo, as he is when your neighbor or your son or your daughter finds

the light of life. We are yet far from knowing the heights and depths that belong to the joy of our Lord unless we have entered into the travail of his soul for the redemption of the whole world from the thraldom of sin and heartache—unless we have caught the rapture of his vision of the time when God shall wipe away all tears from human eyes. Remember, "The joy of the Lord is our strength." You can never know the fulness of Christian manhood, the real glory of Christian womanhood, until you share with Christ the fulness of his love for mankind everywhere.

I must not close this study of Christian joy without a word to any one who is without the comfort of our great Christian hope. What can I say to you to awaken your confidence and your faith in the blessed fact that you may find forgiveness and love and welcome in the arms of the Savior this very hour?

A man who was fond of the chase lived in one of our Southern States where the woods abounded in wild deer. One morning, as he was walking across his field, he heard the sound of hounds in the distance, and as they approached, looking through the cracks of the

old-fashioned rail fence, he saw a little fawn, very weary, its tongue hanging out and its sides lathered with foam. The little thing had just strength enough to leap over the fence, and stood there for a moment, with its great liquid eyes gazing about in a frightened manner. When it saw a hound leap over the fence not far away, its first impulse seemed to be to run again, but instead of running away, it came and fell down in a heap at the feet of the man. He said afterward, "I stood there and fought the dogs for nearly a half hour. I just felt that all the dogs in that county could not capture the little fawn after its weakness had appealed to my strength." He took the scared fawn in his arms, carried it tenderly home, gave it to his children, and it became a household pet. My friend, if a man accustomed to hunting could have a heart like that for the fawn chased by the hounds, what shall we believe about the tenderness of Jesus Christ, who put aside the glory of heaven and came to earth to seek after you? Who gave himself on the cross as a ransom for you, and who is seeking you now, calling in every tender way, and stretching out his arms toward you? It may be that some

of you are chased by the hounds of passion and habit and sin until they have almost reached you with their fangs of deadly danger. Perhaps some of you are already torn and wounded. But if you throw yourself at the feet of Jesus Christ, he will take you in his arms and carry you home rejoicing, the joy of his heart shall be contagious in your heart, and a love joy shall begin between you and your Savior that shall last forever.

TIGHTENING THE BELT OF THE SOUL

"Wherefore, girding up the loins of your mind, be sober and set your hope perfectly on the grace that is to be brought unto you at the revelation of Jesus Christ."—1 Peter 1:13.

THE spirit of congratulation runs through all these words of Peter. He would have the people to whom they are written feel how greatly they are honored in living at a time so favored. He recalls the fact that for hundreds and even thousands of years prophets and great-souled men had looked forward and hoped and prayed for the dawning of a day upon which they had entered. He would have them know that even the angels of heaven were curious and wondering and longing to understand the glory of the epoch to which they were born. He would have them feel the privilege of living in their day, and because they were living in an age so blessed, so full of romance and heroic possibilities, he calls upon

them to gird up the loins of their mind and set themselves in all earnestness, and with hope that nothing can daunt, to do their best for God and humanity in the fellowship of Jesus Christ.

If the people of Peter's day could feel the pressure of that argument, how much more powerful should it be with us to-day. There are always some people who are ready to despair of their age and their race. Every age has some men who prophesy that humanity is a burned-out crater, that we are living in a world that is played out, and they sigh to think they could not have lived in an age of romance when the times were more interesting. We have such people. I can remember in my boyhood the cry that the age of romance had gone, and that civilization had perhaps reached its climax. And yet there has been no such fifty years since the birth of Jesus Christ in Bethlehem as the last half century. Talk about the age of romance being dead! Think what you people who have passed the half-century mark have witnessed. You have seen the entire story of the electric light. You saw electric cars do away with the old cars hauled by horses and

mules. You saw the birth and establishment of the telephone and of wireless telegraphy. You have seen the discovery and growth of the phonograph and the dictograph and the kinetoscope. You watched the inventions leading up to the automobile, the typewriter, the cream separator, and the linotype machine. You have witnessed the discovery of the *X*-ray and of radium, the overthrow of diphtheria and yellow fever, the vaccine for typhoid, and researches that have added more than ten years to the average life of mankind, all compassed in your time. All these things have contributed to the rapidity of still greater transformations in the world. When you were a child, Japan was a fairy island which nobody took seriously. You have seen its growth and transformation into a world nation. You have witnessed the great republic of France grow to stability and power. You have seen Brazil changed to a republic, Korea and Africa opened to the gospel, all China honeycombed with the dynamite of Christian civilization and an empire of thousands of years of antiquity transformed into a republic, with its president and congress asking for the prayers of Christian nations for its

stability and usefulness. You are now in the great epoch ushered in by the World War when men and women are lifting up their hands for democracy in every land under the sun. Time would fail me to simply recount the titles of the great changes in the political history of the world, looking toward higher civilization and nobler triumph for man, that have occurred within our own time. And so I come to you in the spirit of Peter's congratulation, written so long ago, and I congratulate you that we do not live in an age that is burned out nor belong to a race that has become anemic and powerless. No, this is the most romantic age the world ever saw. All the past contributes to make it, spite of all its faults, the most glorious epoch of man. For us prophets have spoken, psalmists have sung, warriors have struggled, and saints have lived and sacrificed, and we have entered into the fruits of their labors. We are living in an age that is thrilled through and through with the influence of Christian thought and Christian hope. The Apostle Paul declared that the gospel of Jesus Christ was the dynamite of God unto salvation, and there are more fuses burning to-day

in the blasting quarries of the world than ever before. The time calls for men and women awake and alert and full of the hope and daring of the gospel to further the purposes of God in Jesus Christ for the advance of humanity. Wherefore, in Peter's words, let me exhort that we gird up the loins of our minds to do our best.

I. The spirit of our text and our theme ought to stimulate us to tighten our belt, since we have only one opportunity to do something for the world, and time flies. Some of you remember the parable of "The Terrible Clock," portrayed by Oliver Wendell Holmes: Each tick said, "Quick," and each hour stroke, "Gone." A great artist once said to his student: "Catch that sky while it lasts—yonder cathedral door, with its brazen wings, can be copied some other time." When Raphael died at thirty-seven years of age, with his marvelous picture of the Transfiguration only half finished, they carried his painting in the funeral procession as a symbol of the incompleteness of life and the brevity of time. The wise man girds up his loins to seize the present in doing and daring and enjoying.

"Be swift, dear heart, in loving,
For time is brief,
And thou may'st soon along life's highway
Keep step with grief.

"Be swift, deart heart, in saying
The kindly word;
When ears are sealed, thy passionate pleading
Will not be heard.

"Be swift, dear heart, in doing
The gracious deed,
Lest soon they whom thou holdest dearest
Be past the need.

"Be swift, dear heart, in giving
The rare sweet flower,
Nor wait to heap with blooms the casket
In some sad hour.

"Dear heart, be swift in loving—
Time speedeth on;
And all thy chance of blessed service
Will soon be gone."

II. Because time flies and because of the great opportunities to do good in the world, I feel like urging every man and woman and every youth to tighten the belt of the soul and harness life to high purpose—to live for great things, and to put all the stream of energy into the flume that pours to the wheel of helpfulness to make a nobler world. Men weigh more

by their energy and earnestness than they do by their talents; yes, a hundredfold more. The earnest man or woman works miracles in the world. I have seen a story of the civil war in Spain. Don Basilio was a captain in the army of Isabella. His friend Ramon was with the Carlists. Don Basilio was captured and sentenced, with twenty others, to be shot. The execution began. Don Basilio was tenth in the line. Seven had fallen. Two more, and then Don Basilio.

At that moment Ramon ran to him and seized him in his arms. "Not this one; not this one, General," he cried.

"Why not this one? Is he a musician?" asked the General. The Carlists did not shoot the musicians, as they did not injure them during the fight, also because they needed music bands for their battalions.

"A musician!" exclaimed Ramon; "Yes, yes, General, he is a musician; a grand musician."

"Upon what instrument does he play?"

"The—the—ah, now I remember, the French horn."

Don Basilio could not play on any instru-

ment; he did not understand a single note of music. The band to which he was allotted was to be organized in fourteen days. Death faced him and the friend who had saved him. Here is what Don Basilio said to his friend: "In fourteen days I will know music; in fourteen days I will play upon the French horn."

The French horn is a very difficult instrument to learn. Don Basilio tells the story: "In fourteen days—ah, the power of the will! —in fourteen days, with their fourteen nights (I did not sleep for half a month)—yes, you have cause to be astonished—in fourteen days I learned to play upon the horn. What days they were. Ramon and I went to the fields and spent our days with a musician who came from a neighboring place to instruct me. I spoke nothing, I thought nothing, I ate nothing. My only thought was music—the French horn. I wanted to learn and I learned it. Had I been dumb, I should have learned to speak; if lame, to walk; if blind, to see—because it was my will to do it. Ah, the will; that is the greatest power on earth. I had the will to do it; therein lies the whole deed. I had the will, and I succeeded."

Let us too summon our wills to whip ourselves to high endeavor toward the noblest things that appeal to the souls of men.

I was once driving through the outskirts of a great city when I noticed a number of what seemed like brick chimneys with iron caps over the top, standing at regular intervals on either side of the road. I noticed that some were much taller than others, but their tops seemed to be on one level. I could not tell what they were, for awhile, but I soon came along to where some lots were being graded up to the level of the street on which I was driving, and then I saw that one of these brick chimneys in a side street adjoining these lots was filled around to the top. Then I knew that all these brick chimneys were hydrants, and that they had been put in ahead, so that when that part of the city was graded up they would be already in their places. They were predictions showing that the whole level of the town was to be lifted up after awhile. Our ideals are like those hydrants. If they are high and noble, and we are struggling toward them with faithful purpose, they are the prophecy of what we are to be, and mark the level to which our lives

will some day rise. Jesus Christ shows his great faith in humanity by the hard things he demands of us. He will not be satisfied with us save when we are doing our best. He will not break the bruised reed, but he does not intend that we shall remain bruised reeds. He will not quench the smoking flax, but it is because he sees in that poor smoke a prophecy of the great flame that shall burn and blaze when it has come to its power. I think our modern pulpit has lowered the appeal to men and women. I think the reason so many sermons are helpless in attracting men to Christ is that they preach too easy a life and do not demand, as Christ did, a transformation that means sacrifice and service of the most heroic type. I think Dr. Jowett is right when he says that if we would call on men to serve, they would respond where now they resist our allurements. If we offered men swords instead of prizes, and battles instead of feasts, there is many a stronghold of iniquity that would be torn down by the heroic enthusiasm we would arouse. There is no joy like the joy of holy battle; there is no song so sweet as the song that rises from the field of conquest. In this glorious day, when

we are living on the roof of the world, Christ is calling us to battle.

"The Son of God goes forth to war,
A kingly crown to gain;
His blood-red banner streams afar;
Who follows in his train?"

III. We should each tighten our belt and take a new start when we remember that however discouraging our surroundings, or however weak we may be in ourselves, we are God's men and women, and he has promised that nothing that we ought to do shall be impossible to us if we put ourselves in his hand to do the work for which we were made. Our weakness and inefficiency come usually from a lack of surrender to God to be tools in his hand to be used for what he sees is our effective service. Dr. Charles Jefferson has this striking parable: He says he heard a voice in his study one day. It said, "I can not shine, I can not do anything. I do not amount to anything. See how dull and stupid I am. You can not expect me to make a light." It was the carbon in the electric light that was talking. It was quite discouraged.

Then the listener broke in: "Are you willing—willing to be used to make a light? Are you willing to be an instrument?"

"Yes, I am," said the carbon.

Then Dr. Jefferson pressed a button, and immediately the carbon shone and the light flooded all the room.

Some of you are in the habit of saying: "I can not do this, I don't amount to anything. There is nothing in me. See how dull and stupid I am. I can not make a light." Stop saying that. The only question is, Are you willing to be used, to be a medium, to be an instrument? Are you willing to let God shine through you? Everything depends on that. If you have been a failure in the past, it has been because you have not had the faith and courage just to give yourself with all your latent force into the hand of God to be used in the path of duty. If you are ready to do that now, God is able to make your life shine and glow with usefulness such as you have never known and never hoped for. It may be some of you need above everything to hear just this message. There have been times when you have been greatly used of God, but you have

dropt into a rut where you no longer hope to be useful. David Lloyd George tells the story of a ministerial friend of his who married a rich wife and gave up his work, doing only occasional duty in special circumstances. He was traveling one day by train and entered a carriage in which there were two Welsh women and an Englishman. The women were so deferential to the minister that when the latter left the train the Englishman asked if he were the squire. "No, sir," was the answer, "he's not the squire. He's a—he's a retired Christian, sir." Almost every church has some retired Christians in it, who live on memories of days when they were useful. If any one here has reached that stage, I want to exhort him to tighten his belt and take a new venture in the service of God. Age and experience and even weakness are often sources of miraculous power when they are completely consecrated to God's service. There are victories you can win now that you never could have won at any other stage in your life. The sunset of life has its glory as well as the sunrise and the noonday. Everything is beautiful in its time to the man or the woman who lets hope have

the right of way in the heart. Peter urges the friends to whom he writes to let hope have free swing and to set their hope perfectly on the grace that is to be brought to them at the revelation of Jesus Christ.

It is no competition to which I am sending you, but a call to a still nobler personal character and career. Maltbie Babcock says beautifully that it is not our business in life to get ahead of other people, but to get ahead of ourselves: to break our own record, to outstrip our yesterdays by to-days, to bear our trials more beautifully than we ever dreamed we could, to whip the tempter inside and out as we never whipt him before, to give as we never have given, to do our work with more force and a finer finish than ever—this is the true idea, to get ahead of ourselves. To beat some one else in a game, or to be beaten, may mean much or little. To crowd ourselves to a higher level always means a great deal. Whether we win or not, we are playing better than we ever did before, and that is the point, after all. God help us to tighten the belt of the soul so that up to the very last every one of us may play ever and ever a better game of life.

IV. In all these appeals which Peter makes for greater service and nobler living he has constantly in mind our relation to Jesus Christ. And I must not close without recalling to our minds the tenderest and most sacred appeal of all, that we should tighten the belt of our souls and nerve ourselves for heroic service when we remember our relation to Jesus Christ. We are not our own, we have been bought with a price, even the precious blood of Christ.

Dr. Len Broughton was once holding meetings in one of our Southern cities when a man called at the hotel to see him, and when he came up to Broughton's room Broughton found him to be a farmer with great horny places in his hands, indicative of hard work. He was drest in rough farmer clothes.

After a little conversation the man said, "I suppose you wonder why I am here."

Broughton said, "Yes, sir, I really do." For Broughton had found that he was a good Christian and he could not see where he could be of any special help to him.

The farmer said, "I came just to give you a story. You are fond of stories in your sermons, and I thought I would give you a new

one. I don't know whether I am going to be able to tell it to you or not, because it comes so close home to me." Then he pulled a letter out of his pocket, which he did not give to Broughton for some time.

He said, "I have a boy—only one child. We worked awful hard, wife and I, on the farm, to educate him, for he was such a bright, promising lad. We passed him through our home college with honors. It took everything we could make to do it. We often denied ourselves food that we needed. And finally, we sent him to a great university. And a little while ago we got a telegram from him to this effect: 'Graduated with first honors.' And, sir, you can not imagine how proud we were of that. Everything we had was wrapt up in that boy. His mother had worked and I had worked; we had toiled together, and now we must send him a telegram—we had only just money enough to pay for it. Here is the telegram: 'Mother and father are proud of you to-day.' "

The old farmer choked a little, and his eyes filled with tears as he went on: "Sir, when he

got that telegram he sat down and wrote this letter, and I want you to read it."

Dr. Broughton read it. Such a sweet letter it was, too. The gist of it was: "Father, your and mother's telegram nearly kills me. You talk about being proud of me that day, and I was not thinking about myself. I was thinking about your and mother's horny hands that had made it possible for me to be here."

The old farmer then said, "I want to keep that letter as long as I live."

And Broughton said, "You would do well to keep it."

Dr. Broughton says that when the old man went out his heart just broke in tenderness as he felt how that boy's attitude toward his father and mother exprest the attitude which he himself ought to feel toward Jesus Christ. God grant that we, too, may catch its message of grateful appreciation and love. He who gave himself for us, who redeemed us with his own blood, calls us to service in fellowship with himself.

"Under an Eastern sky,
Amid a rabble's cry,
A man went forth to die
For me.

"Thorn-crowned his blessed head,
Blood-stained his every tread;
Cross-laden, on he sped,
For me.

"Pierced glow his hands and feet,
Three hours o'er him beat
Fierce rays of noontide heat,
For me.

"Thus wert thou made all mine;
Lord, make me wholly thine;
Grant grace and strength divine
To me.

"In thought, and word, and deed,
Thy will to do. O lead
My soul, e'en though it bleed,
To thee."

THE CHRISTIAN'S JUNK PILE

"Putting away therefore all wickedness, and all guile, and hypocrisies, and envies, and all evil speakings, as newborn babes, long for the spiritual milk which is without guile, that ye may grow thereby unto salvation; if ye have tasted that the Lord is gracious."—1 Peter 2:1-3.

THIS theme depends as much upon the attitude of the audience as it does upon the speaker himself. The natural man does not like this sort of theme. It is too heart-searching, comes too close home. If profitable, it must stir the conscience too earnestly to be a comfortable discussion in which to indulge. If it is to be profitable to us, it will be so because through honesty and humility there shall be aroused in us a sensitive consciousness concerning ourselves and an earnest desire to be developed along the line of the noblest and truest Christian manhood or womanhood.

I begin this sermon knowing that the fate of it is in your hands rather than mine. And, indeed, that is always so to a larger extent than

we usually realize. It has been a common figure used to admonish preachers to greater earnestness and zeal, to compare the preacher to a lawyer who is addressing a jury and pleading for a verdict. It is often said that the minister should exhibit the same earnestness in seeking to win a jury to give a verdict according to his wishes that a lawyer does with a jury in an important case in an earthly court. But, as has been said by others, there is a tremendous difference that destroys the parallel. The juryman in court has no personal interest in the verdict; if he had such an interest, he would be disqualified. But the minister summons his jury (and that is especially true in a theme like the one we are to study now) to pass judgment on itself, and lethargy and prejudice and old habits all conspire to resist the appeal he makes. A good many of the hearers do discover an application—an application to the man in the next pew; but a personal application they stedfastly resist. Then, too, the lawyer in court is speaking to a jury that is bound to make up its mind on a case as proved or unproved, but the preacher has to deal with hearers who are often not conscious

of an obligation to make up their minds at all. Therefore there is need of earnest sincerity. If I could be sure that every one who hears me felt himself under bond to welcome every bit of truth I bring, and apply it to his own life, at any cost of cherished prejudice, we should all be conscious of strange power in this discourse. No honest man could fail to preach with tenfold power to an audience like that.

I. Our text is first an exhortation to throw away some things that we may have others. And all life is full of such choices. Paul compares life to a race, and exhorts that we strip ourselves of every unnecessary weight and burden that we may do our best, that we choose the prize at the end of the race rather than the things we must throw away in order to get it. Peter uses the figure of growing manhood, and assures us that there are certain things antagonistic to the development of Christian character, and if we are to grow up into Christ-like personalities these things must be thrown away. Every life as it grows greater is the illustration of this principle. First the baby is pleased with the rattle and the rubber ring to chew, but when it gets a little older, it throws

these away for building blocks and toys of another sort. After a little, if the child really grows in mind as well as body, it drops these for school books, and its tops and playthings are of a higher kind. As development goes on, these in turn are cast aside, outgrown; and every growing youth has realized Paul's saying, "When I became a man, I put away childish things." Every man and woman who has lived past middle age and has grown truly looks back over every epoch and can see all along the path things they have thrown away which for a while seemed necessary and important. So it becomes true that you can judge a person by what he can do without and by what he has outgrown.

Phillips Brooks declares that on these two ladders, these two scales, the order of human character mounts up—the power to do without and the power not to do without. As you grow better there are some things which are always relaxing their grasp upon you; there are other things which are always taking tighter hold upon your life. You sweep up out of the grasp of money, praise, ease, distinction. You sweep up into the necessity of

truth, courage, virtue, love, and God. The gravitation of the earth grows weaker, the gravitation of the stars takes stronger and stronger hold upon you. And on the other hand, as you grow worse, as you go down, the terrible opposite of all this comes to pass: the highest necessities let you go, and the lowest necessities take tighter hold of you. Still, as you go down, you are judged by what you can do without, and what you can not do without. You come down at last where you can not do without a comfortable dinner and an easy bed, but you can do without performing an act of charity or without a thought of God. The poor sot finds his misery sealed with this double seal, that he can not miss his glass of liquor, and he can miss without a sigh every good company and virtuous wish. Let us judge where we stand by the things we are willing to let go for the sake of God and humanity.

II. Peter gives us some suggestions as to the kind of things that we must throw on the junk pile as useless and injurious if we are to grow into the kind of men and women that God demands we shall be. First, he declares as a general principle that we must throw away

all wickedness, and then he helps us by suggesting certain things, certain phases of evil, by which we may test ourselves concerning our growth in grace and in a righteous life. The first of these that he suggests is "guile," a certain lack of wholesome directness which in a Scotchman we would call "canny," in an American we would call "sharp"—a kind of selfishness which roils the water of life and robs us of perfect sincerity and frankness of dealing. We know what it is in life better than we can define it. There is a story of an Arab who went to his neighbor and said, "Lend me your rope."

"I can't," said the neighbor.

"Why can't you?"

"Because I want to use the rope myself. I want to tie up five cubic feet of water with it."

"How on earth," sneered the would-be borrower, "can you tie up water with a rope?"

"My friend," said the neighbor, "Allah is great, and he permits us to do strange things with a rope when we don't want to lend it."

The least lack of frankness and genuineness robs us of the truest character and many of the joys which ought to be ours. Spurgeon tells

a story of a poor old woman who, when she saw her landlord coming to the front door, hid in the garden behind her cottage because she did not have the rent ready. The landlord was passing a few days later and seeing the old lady, said he had called a day or two earlier but had not found her in. Then the old lady confest. She had not been out; but she supposed he wanted the rent and she had no money for him. Then her landlord laughed good-naturedly: "Why, no, Margaret, I was not after the rent. I happened to have a sovereign I thought you would like to have. So I stopt as I passed, to give it to you. Now, unfortunately, I haven't got it; I gave it to some one else." How often a little guile in us robs us of the gracious purpose God has for us. This guile, as Peter means it, is I think the peculiar sin of "good" people, respectable people, people who have been so hedged about that there are no outbreaking sins charged against them, who are likely to be self-complacent, and yet lack that perfect unselfish devotion to God and his service, that unquestioning loyalty to Christ, which would make them greatly useful.

I think it would do all of us good to ask ourselves the heart-searching question:

"Were the whole world good as you—not an atom better—
Were it just as pure and true,
Just as pure and true as you;
Just as strong in faith and works;
Just as free from crafty quirks;
All extortion, all deceit;
Schemes its neighbor to defeat;
Schemes its neighbors to defraud;
Schemes some culprit to applaud—
Would this world be better?

"If this whole world followed you—followed to the letter—
Would it be a nobler world,
All deceit and falsehood hurled
From it altogether;
Malice, selfishness, and lust
Banished from beneath the crust
Covering human hearts from view—
Tell me, if it followed you,
Would the world be better?"

One of the specifications which Peter uses as a suggestion of junk for the growing Christian to get rid of is "hypocrisy." There are many unconscious hypocrisies which nevertheless rob us of much of our power and usefulness. People who become accustomed to seeing the evil in other people and making it an excuse for their own failure to do their duty

are consciously or unconsciously hypocrites. A bright clergyman was arguing with a friend on the desirability of attending church. At last he put the question squarely, "What is your personal reason for not attending?" The man smiled in a quiet way as he replied, "The fact is, one finds so many hypocrites there." Returning the smile, the clergyman said, "Do not let that keep you away—there is always room for one more."

One of the greatest dangers of hypocrisy to Christian people is the danger of professing more than they have of the Christian spirit. Some of the saddest tragedies I have ever known among Christian men and women have come about in the career of people who at the outset were deeply sincere and devoted, had entered into a very rich and restful Christian experience, made profession of entire sanctification, after a time fell away from their complete and whole-hearted service to God, and lost out of the heart and life the reality, while the outward profession of the lips still waved like a flag over an empty fortress from which the army has been withdrawn. Such tragedies are terrible, and we need to be careful concern-

ing the genuineness of our inner spiritual life. We should cherish nothing within that robs us of our perfect fellowship with Christ. A traveler in Borneo tells of finding there a great cave which was occupied in the daytime by the bats, and at night by the swallows. As he watched the mouth of the cave about sunset the first column of bats appeared, and wheeled away down the valley in a long coil, winding over the treetops in a wonderfully close and regular order. These were followed in less than a minute's time by another column, and in forty minutes, forty-seven distinct columns were counted, each about six hundred feet long by ten feet thick. It was estimated that over half a million bats flew out of the cave in less than three-quarters of an hour. As the last bats flew away the swallows appeared in enormous numbers and for a long time there was a ceaseless whirr of wings. Soon after dawn the next morning the bats returned, and literally rained into the cave, while the swallows passed out in a counter current. Some people try to live a double life like that. To the outer world they try to make it appear that they are as innocent as swallows, while underneath the

bats hold revel. But, as in the case of "Dr. Jekyl and Mr. Hyde," the evil Mr. Hyde came at last into control, so the man who lets the bats of evil thoughts and impure imaginations hold revel in his soul will after a while be mastered and controlled by them to his final disaster.

Another specification which Peter uses of proper stuff for the junk pile is "envyings." Envy is the more dangerous to us because in the beginning it is hard to see the real ugliness and deadly poison of its nature. I have seen a parable of a young cabbage that discovered some specks on the under side of one of its leaves.

"You had better shake them off at once," said an elder tree close at hand. "I am older than you, and have seen many cabbages destroyed by specks like that."

"Oh, nonsense," said the cabbage, "how can these wee things destroy anything? Besides, I rather like them—they are pretty to look upon and afford me diversion."

The days passed, and after a time out of the eggs there crept some queer-looking creatures with voracious jaws and hairy necks.

"Ugh," exclaimed the cabbage. "I don't like the look of you. Get off of my leaves, will you?"

The caterpillars took no notice, but at once fell to work to eat up the tender leaves.

"Here," cried the cabbage, "I am not going to stand that. Don't you see that you are spoiling my beautiful leaves? Get off, you ugly creatures!"

But the caterpillars simply held up their heads for a minute, and then commenced eating again. Bit by bit, they ate up the leaves until the cabbage was ragged and useless, and the gardener coming along pulled it up and threw it on the rubbish heap.

"Oh, I wish I had listened to the elder tree," exclaimed the cabbage root, "but I never thought such tiny eggs could contain such dreadful destructive creatures."

Envies are like those eggs on the cabbage leaf. They nested in the heart of Cain until they grew to such power as to master him and make him a murderer and a vagabond on the face of the earth. They grew in the hearts of the sons of Jacob until they ate out all love and sympathy and brotherly compassion,

and they sold Joseph into slavery. Look out for the envies that nestle in your soul. The junk pile is the only safe place for them.

Peter gives another specification to which many people need to give heed—that of "evil speaking." We can trace a large share of the trouble in the world to this. It was this kind of speaking that Jesus meant when he exclaimed so sternly, "I say unto you that for every idle word that men shall speak, they shall give account thereof in the day of judgment." People speak recklessly so often of the character or reputation of another, not for a moment understanding the deadly weapon which they use. They do not intend the awful harm which they bring about. It is to them but an idle word in conversation. But it mars and wounds and kills, and nothing the speaker can ever do can eradicate the harm which has been accomplished. Robert Louis Stevenson writes with insight as well as indignation when he characterizes such speech:

> "I am 'the smiler with the knife,'
> The battener upon garbage, I:
> Dear heaven, with such a rancid life,
> Were it not better for to die?"

Many an evil speech would be shut back behind the clenched teeth if the one tempted to speak it could realize how impossible it is to overtake it after it is once let loose.

" 'Careful with fire' is good advice, we know;
'Careful with words' is ten time better so;
Thoughts unexpressed may sometimes fall back dead,
But God himself can't kill them when they're said."

I have been told by a hunter of big game in the East that tigers born of a man-eating tigress are always man-eaters, for they get their first lessons in hunting from their mother. A tigress teaches her whelps to hunt as a cat does her kitten, by bringing them live prey to practise on. Some years ago, in one of the hill districts of India, a tigress was killed whose taking off caused much rejoicing among the natives. She was known all over India as the man-eater who once had given her whelps a live man to play with. She carried off the man from an open hut in the forest where some woodcutters were sleeping. His companions took refuge in trees, and from their place of safety saw her take the man alive to where the whelps were waiting close by and lay him down before them. As the man attempted to

crawl away the whelps would cling to his legs with teeth and claws, the tigress looking on and purring with pleasure. Do you know, I believe that gossipers and scandal-mongers are usually developed in the same way. The children of a scandal-loving mother or father are almost certain to develop the same man-eating trait. A bloodthirsty tigress teaching her whelps to play with a live man, and thus teaching them how to kill, is not an exaggerated illustration of the viciousness of a family brought up to gossip and speak evil of their neighbors.

There is another kind of evil-speaking of which some of us who never slander are often in danger of being guilty—*viz.*, a critical censoriousness of those who are close to us, whom we really love. Many good people make their goodness unattractive by their manner of speaking to the people with whom they live and deal. We may try to excuse ourselves for a cruelly blunt manner of speaking or a quick, sharp utterance, that is like the lash of a whip or a stroke of a dagger to the one who receives it, by saying that it is our temperament and we do not mean anything by it. In God's name,

let us be honest with our own selves. A large part of the sorrow and strife and lack of harmony in good homes comes from this very thing. If the sharp words could be banished, if the cruel, critical words could be silenced, if a little more consideration could be had before words are spoken at all, how many aching hearts would be soothed and how many marred careers would be made perfect.

"It takes so little to make us sad,
Just a slighting word or a doubting sneer,
Just a scornful smile on some lips held dear;
And our footsteps lag, though the goal seemed near,
And we lose the courage and hope we had—
So little it takes to make us sad.

"It takes so little to make us glad,
Just a cheering clasp of a friendly hand,
Just a word from one who can understand;
And we finish the task we long had planned,
And we lose the doubt and the fear we had—
So little it takes to make us glad."

III. When we look at all these things which are so common among us, and note how much junk we carry in our conversation and dealing, we wonder sometimes whether there is any chance to build up in the world that perfectly beautiful and splendid life of Jesus Christ.

But we get hope when we listen to Peter as to the method of accomplishment. We are not to throw away these things by our own will power or keep ourselves by our own watchfulness from again becoming victims of them, but through Jesus Christ we are to be born again into a new spirit, to be nourished by spiritual milk, to taste in our very souls the preciousness of Jesus, and through our association with him are to be lifted far above the junk pile into newness of life. Everything that is good and fine can come to us only through association with Jesus, but through him and in fellowship with him everything that is good enough to be true can become possible in you and in me.

Some years ago I was poking about an old stone smokehouse of the type used a hundred years ago, with an entrance through only one door. I came on a long, snail-like looking creature that was an entire stranger to me. On one end which I took to be its head there seemed to be, on the top, a single eye—very large and very bright and dazzling. It seemed to look me through and through. It seemed uncanny with that single staring eye, and the

whole creature was loathsome. I got it on a shingle and carried it in to the telephone, where I would have it close at hand to describe, and then I called up a friend of mine whose special business it was to know all about bugs and worms and snails and things of that kind, and told him what I had found, and asked him what it was. He laughed merrily and said that the end which I thought was its head was its tail, and what I had taken to be an eye was not an eye at all. And furthermore he told me that what I had found was the caterpillar of one of the most glorious moths or butterflies that is ever seen in that part of the world, and that if I would put the repulsive creature away in the dark, after a while he would throw off his ugliness and fly forth in dazzling beauty and glory among the summer flowers. As I carried the ugly thing back to give him a chance for his career I said to him, "You ugly thing, you are just like man." When I look out over the world's squalor and selfishness and sin, when I see it wallowing in its malice and guile and hypocrisies and envies and evil speaking, I lose hope and am ready to despair of mankind. But when I turn from man in his wickedness and

sinfulness and look at Jesus Christ with all the beauty and glory of his character, arrayed in all those graces that make manhood splendid and glorious, and see him take hold of a poor drunken tinker like John Bunyan and lift him up out of the mire and the wretchedness of sin; when I see going to the junk pile the things that marred and wounded and destroyed him, and behold emerging under the influence of Jesus Christ those traits of character so beautiful and lovely in him; when I read in the Word of God the promise that if a man has this hope in him he purifieth himself, and that after a while when we meet Christ in the skies and see him face to face we shall be like him, my heart grows big with hope and courage for mankind, and for myself.

Dear friends, let us taste of the graciousness of Jesus Christ. Let us, through fellowship with him, lay aside everything that is out of harmony with his character of love. If we do this, the whole journey of life shall grow sweet in the fellowship which his love will bring to us.

A schooner arrived at Port Townsend, Washington, a while ago from Honolulu, which had had an interesting experience. A

hundred and fifty miles off Cape Flattery it ran into an immense flock of wild canary birds, thousands of which settled on the rigging and other parts of the vessel. The sailors furnished their feathered visitors with food and drink, and multitudes of them remained on board contentedly, singing their sweet lays until the schooner reached port. God has many singing birds which he sends to rejoice the hearts of those who sail stedfastly toward the port of heaven. A good conscience, a hope of heaven, assurance of reunion with loved ones, the friendship of Jesus and all who love him—these are some of the sweet singers that may rejoice us by the way.

FOLLOWING OUR PACE-MAKER

"Christ also suffered for you, leaving you an example, that ye should follow his steps: who did no sin, neither was guile found in his mouth: who, when he was reviled, reviled not again; when he suffered, threatened not; but committed himself to him that judgeth righteously: who his own self bare our sins in his body upon the tree, that we, having died unto sins, might live unto righteousness; by whose stripes ye were healed."—1 Peter 2:21-24.

OUR theme lies in this, that Jesus Christ himself was the first Christian. We have a right to call ourselves Christians only as we are loyal to him and accept him as the pace-maker for our lives. It is for us to find, if we can, in the pursuit of our theme some of those great characteristics of Christ which underlie his marvelous personality and career, that we may find instruction and inspiration for the building up of our own characters and the conduct of our lives.

I. The first great characteristic of the life of Jesus suggested in the text is his self-denial, his suffering for others, the complete surren-

der of himself to the one great purpose which dominated him—the salvation of humanity. It is that which first of all separates Christ from every other great personality. The first thought about Jesus is the thought of him as a Savior. In a book published a few years ago a traveler tells the story of finding in Lhassa, in Tibet, a devout man who had gone to the Catholic chapel station to see a priest, but they were at service. While waiting, he looked through the door, and, for the first time in his life, saw the image of Christ upon the cross. He waited till the service was finished, and then, forgetting all the other business on which he came, asked what the figure meant. When they told him that our great and infinite God, in his love, had come down to earth and taken our nature, and died, and rose again, he was lost in wonder. After half an hour of silence, he fell on his face before the cross, and said: "Thou art the only true Buddha. Henceforth I will worship none but thee." The kingdom had come like a lightning flash to that man and had revealed to him the Savior and Friend, and he became a Christian.

The Christ has set the pace for the noblest

manhood for all time. The noblest success can never come to men who toil with selfish calculation, in cold blood; it is achieved only through that supreme surrender and sacrifice which counts no cost too great, or counts not the cost at all, so that some great end is accomplished.

The ordinary affairs of human life are full of illustrations of this truth. I saw a story recently of a man high in authority in the English government. He was once a youth in a law office in a provincial town. The office was situated within sight of the railway station, and the heads of the firm often called upon certain of the clerks to go on long railway journeys at very short notice. This youth noticed that there was often very considerable delay in their setting out, because they had to go home and pack a bag before they started. He determined that if ever his turn should come, he would be ready at a moment's notice to leave. He brought down to the office a small bag containing what he would need if called upon, and kept it under his desk in readiness for the hoped-for opportunity. His fellow clerks joked him unmercifully about this; but the chief, probably hearing about it,

at last gave him his chance. Coming to him hurriedly, one day, he said: "Do you think you can catch that train now coming into the station? Go, and we will telegraph instructions to you at the next stopping-place." He grabbed his bag in one hand and his hat in the other without a moment's delay and caught the train. So it was that by doing more than he was compelled to do, more than he was paid to do, he got his chance, and rapidly climbed to success. He counted neither comfort nor hours; he looked only at the goal. And so Jesus Christ, looking forward beyond the cross, saw the travail of his soul and was satisfied.

In the higher realm of life Christ is our pace-maker. If we are to be the great servants of humanity, great helpers of our time, great Christians, we must follow our pace-maker in this spirit of unthinking, uncalculating giving of ourselves to Christian service. J. Wilbur Chapman tells how he had a talk with General Booth, the founder of the Salvation Army, a little while before his going home, and he asked that flaming torch of evangelism the secret of his wonderful usefulness in the world in rescu-

ing the fallen and bringing hope to the darkest spots of the earth. The old hero, with eyes full of tears, said earnestly: "I will tell you the secret—God has had all there was of me. There have been men with greater brains than I, men with greater opportunities; but from the day I got the poor of London on my heart and a vision of what Jesus Christ would do for them, I made up my mind that God should have all of William Booth there was. If anything has been achieved, it is because God has had all the adoration of my heart, all the power of my will, and all the influence of my life." That was the secret—a man all aflame with love and devotion, poured forth uncalculatingly without counting the cost, in the service of Christ. And many men in other lines of service have thus followed the great pace-maker. Sir Robertson Nicoll says it thrills the heart to read of Berthelot, refusing to take out patents which would have brought him a colossal fortune, altho he had six children to keep. Offered by sugar refiners a life annuity of at least 250,000 francs for a new method of extracting glucose, he said, "I will give it to you for nothing. We work for honor in

French laboratories." Pasteur sowed broadcast his tubes of safety and life. Chevreul had only to say a word to become master of millions. He kept his lips resolutely closed and died comparatively poor. Curie, because he wanted the precious stuff to experiment on for the good of mankind, rejected a rich man's offer of a fortune for a few decigrams of radium. The glory of man is that not one of us is so humble and insignificant but that he may catch this spirit of Christ and so be enabled to live in the clear atmosphere of love and helpfulness. When we catch a glimpse of this possibility, we are thrilled with the consciousness that it is not by getting or by hoarding, but by helping and sharing, that the true happiness of life may be found.

"A little more cross and a little less creed,
A little more beauty of brotherly deed;
A little more bearing of things to be borne,
With faith in the infinite triumph of morn.
A little less doubt and a little more do
Of the simple, sweet service each day brings to view."

II. Jesus Christ sets the pace for us in enthusiasm for humanity. Not for some high class or caste of humanity, but enthusiasm and

love for men, women, and children of the common human kind. Our modern civilization is often very heathen in this respect. A young lady in a wealthy family of high social and fashionable position went one morning into the conservatory and found there a little bird that in the night had beaten out its life against the glass. She brought it into the breakfast room and showed it to a party of friends, and she was so deeply moved with compassion that she dropt a tear on its bright plumage. She was so sorry for the death of the bird. At the breakfast following a discussion arose about missions, and she who had been so sorry for the bird spoke about the folly of enthusiasm for the missions to the heathen. She said: "It is scarcely credible that these black people have souls." And yet she belonged to the company of those who call themselves after the name of him who said, "Of how much more value are ye than the birds!" A tremendous revolution would be brought about speedily if we all let Jesus set the pace for us in our estimate of humanity and enthusiasm to help it.

I have just come upon this true story: A young Swedish woman left her home for the

United States to join a young man to whom she had been engaged for a number of years. They were to be married in New York City. On her way to America she stopt three months in London to learn as much as she could of the English tongue, after which she sailed for New York. When she arrived there, the young man did not appear. Instead, she found a note, and that note read like this: I am unable to meet you in New York, to my sorrow, but I will meet you in a certain inland town, naming the town where they had intended to live. He gave her directions how to get there, and two days later she arrived in that Western town. She expected, of course, to meet her fiancé, but was again disappointed. She went to the best hotel in the town, thinking he would come, but he did not come. Two months later she found that he had died suddenly; that was the reason he did not meet her as he agreed. While she waited in the hotel for him she was observed as a beautiful foreigner, but nobody spoke to her. At length, she went to the office and talked to the young man behind the desk, told him her situation, that her money was gone, and she did not

know what to do; and he told it around the hotel. Finally, a man came who looked old enough to be her father, and he seemed courteous and nice; he talked to her in tender and friendly and fatherly words. He told her that he would be only too glad to take her to a good Christian home in the city where she could stay until some arrangement could be made. She got into a carriage with him and he took her to a house beautiful on the outside, but the moment that the girl entered the door of that place she saw she had been caught in a trap and she began to weep and to beg that she might be put in touch with the police. But the head of the house said: "No police for this place. Once in here, always in here." But through the compassion of another wretched inmate of that house she managed to slip to the telephone and inform the police. The police came and took her to the police station. There by the help of the police matron she got to use the telephone and called up a minister. That minister came to see her, and there in the reception room at the police station she told him her sad story. He doubted very much if it were true, but nevertheless he was forced to

take it; and after she had finished in agony and sorrow, the tears raining down, he said: "My good woman, let us pray"; and he got down on his knees. But she did not. Instead of getting down, she got up on her feet, and she cried: "Oh, Mister, I don't want your prayers now, I want a friend!" It was a rebuke that went straight to his heart, for he felt that she was right. She wanted a human hand that she could take hold of to guide her, she wanted a human sympathy and fellowship that could give her aching heart the comfort of its communion and brotherhood. Dear friends, what we need above everything in this modern life of ours is that we shall follow our pacemaker in going about doing good, in enthusiasm for our fellows that will lead us to practical helpfulness, day by day, making life easier and safer for the men and women about us. It was said of Jesus Christ that the common people heard him gladly. He had such a genius for friendship, he was such a companionable man, that sinful, sorrowing people, hard-working people, and people with all sorts of burdens, found it easy to open their hearts to him, and thus made it possible for him to

help them. We too must follow the pace he has set for us in this regard.

"Sorrow comes and sorrow goes,
Life is flecked with shine and shower.
Now the tear of grieving flows,
Now we smile in happy hour;
Death awaits us every one,
Toiler, dreamer, preacher, writer,
Let us, then, ere life be done,
Make the world a little brighter.

"Burdens that our neighbors bear,
Easier let us try to make them,
Chains, perhaps, our neighbors wear,
Let us do our best to break them;
From the straitened hand and mind
Let us loose the binding fetter,
Let us, as the Lord designed,
Make the world a little better.

"Selfish brooding sears the soul,
Fills the mind with clouds of sorrow,
Darkens all the shining goal,
Of the sun-illumined morrow.
Wherefore should our lives be spent
Daily growing blind and blinder—
Let us, as the Master meant,
Make the world a little kinder!"

III. We must follow the pace Jesus Christ has set for us in the fight against evil. Jesus' sympathy and compassion for the weak and

sinful and broken men and women he met was no weak sentimentalism. His tears of sympathy kept close pace with his red-hot indignation against oppression and wrong-doing. Many people have a distorted idea of the manhood of Jesus Christ. They think of him as so gentle and so kind and sympathetic and meek that they can not conceive of him having power to get mad with red-hot, indignant wrath at anything. The Christ portrayed to us in the gospel is no such goody-goody creature as that. If you will turn to the nineteenth chapter of Luke's life of Jesus Christ, you will find that Christ, on the very day that he wept over the city of Jerusalem and cried out in his great sympathy for the sorrows that were to come upon the poor people there, went directly from those blinding tears into the temple and found there a lot of greedy, grafting scoundrels who were enriching themselves by the desecration of the house of God, took a whip and in his wrath drove them from the temple, and with flashing eyes exclaimed: "It is written, My house is the house of prayer: but ye have made it a den of thieves." Christ could weep hot tears of pity, and he could flame with the pas-

sion of deep indignation. And we, as representatives of Jesus Christ, must not lose the power to get mad against oppression and cruelty and meanness that brings sorrow and suffering to our weaker brothers. Nothing so convinces the world that Christ is a living personality, a living spirit in the midst of Christians, as a vital, courageous warfare on our part against those who oppress humanity. We must show the sympathy and compassion of Jesus Christ when we deal with those who have been hurt and robbed and harmed by sin; but if our sympathy and compassion is real and genuine, and not mere sentimental twaddle, we shall show to the wicked oppressor of the weak the courage and indignation of Christ against those who lay burdens too heavy to be borne upon his brothers and sisters.

I have read somewhere that on one occasion in the time of the first Napoleon, one of his veteran officers, a sergeant of the guard, to whom Napoleon was everything, said to a young soldier with whom he had formed a friendship, "Conscript, the Emperor is come, the Emperor is here." And the young soldier said, "How do you know it, Sergeant? I have

just been down to the General's quarters and have heard and seen nothing." And the sergeant said, "All the world is up and stirring. You don't yet understand it, Conscript; but he is here. I feel it in the soles of my feet. when he is not come everything limps; but now, see down there? Look at those expresses galloping along the road. Everything is moving. Our enemies have no need of their spectacles to see if he is with us. They will find it out soon enough." And the sergeant laughed in his long mustache. Oh, my friends, I pray God that our modern church of every name and order shall give more signs of the presence of Jesus Christ in its courage and activity, in its aggressive onward march against sin; in its fight against the liquor traffic, and the white slave traffic, and the oppressive and wicked combinations of grafting finance. In all these places where the enemy of souls throws out his hosts of evil to battle, may we be so conscious of the presence of Christ and be so inspired by his leadership, that the world shall know that Jesus is with us because of the boldness and unconquerable courage which we show in the face of the enemy.

IV. Jesus sets the pace for us in his serene faith in the ultimate triumph of humanity—the final triumph of good over evil in human life. In the darkest hours of his earthly career, when he was looking straight into the garden of Gethsemane and at the cross on Calvary, Jesus was promising his disciples that his joy should remain with them, and fill them full of joy, a joy that no man should be able to take away from them. And that is one of the great mysteries of life, that sorrow is often born out of joy and joy is often born out of sorrow, that laughter and tears are often mingled together and one is often the outgrowth of the other. Christ has put the seal of glory on them both, and they both mean good to us.

"If love were always laughter
And grief were always tears,
With nothing to come after
To mark the waiting years,
I'd pray a life of love to you,
Sent down from heaven above to you,
And never grief come near to you,
To spread its shadow, dear, to you—
If love were always laughter
And grief were always tears.

"But grief brings often laughter,
And love, ah, love brings tears!
And both leave ever after
Their blessings on the years;
So I, dear heart, would sue for you
A mingling of the two for you,
That grief may lend its calm to you,
And love may send its balm to you—
For grief brings often laughter
And love brings often tears."

The greatest men and women of our day and of every day have caught from Jesus Christ the secret of his hope and faith in the ultimate triumph of good in the life of man, and have been comforted and made serene by it in their supreme struggles. Great souls like John Howard and Dorothea Dix and Frances Willard and John Bright and Gladstone, and multitudes of others, have been the great optimists of their day, seeing more clearly than others the hurts of humanity, but, following the great pace-maker, looking up the shining pathway of history to eternal triumph under the leadership of Jesus Christ. When Lord Salisbury stood up in the British Parliament to speak on the death of Gladstone, he made this great statement: "He will be remembered not so much for the causes in which he was

engaged or the political projects which he favored, but as a great example, to which history hardly furnishes a parallel, of a great Christian man."

Harry Steel Morrison has written a little book in which he tells of his crossing the Atlantic, as a boy of sixteen, to interview Mr. Gladstone for a New York newspaper. Arriving in London, this venturesome boy at once opened up correspondence with Gladstone, never dreaming that he was trying to see a man who was every day denied to famous people. He was refused by a secretary, a son, and a daughter, but finally, through persistence, got a hearing from Mrs. Gladstone. He told her his mission, and showed her a New York newspaper containing a narrative of his experiences, as well as a drawing of himself, seated in the castle interviewing Mr. Gladstone. Mrs. Gladstone was very much amused, saying that if Mr. Gladstone would see him it would at least be a change for him. Mr. Gladstone did see him, that sixteen-year-old boy, treated him like a young prince, and sent him away with a new outlook upon life. Writing of that interview afterward, Morrison said Gladstone

made one statement which will remain with him always, "Remember," said the "Grand Old Man," "that fame and notoriety are not the things which count at the last. I would be very unhappy if I felt that in being a statesman I have sacrificed any of the principles I embraced with the Christian faith." There is the secret of the man's greatness.

But it may be that some of you who hear me are broken-hearted at this glimpse of the grandeur of the noble Christian life, and are saying to yourselves in despair, "There was a time when this would have been an inspiration to me, and when it would have been possible to have heard it as a bugle call to battle, but it is too late! I am wounded and crippled by sin, I am the prisoner of evil habit, and I can not rise to this inspiring life, however grand it may be." But thank God, I have a message for you, for Jesus is seeking after the straying and the wounded and the weak that are ready to perish, that he may succor them and bid them hope again. My good friend, Frederick Shannon, in one of his beautiful sermons, calls attention to an occasion during the Franco-Prussian War, at the siege of Paris,

when the French went out under cover of night to gather up their wounded. Moving about among the injured, they called in low tones, so as not to betray their presence to the enemy: "If there are any wounded here, we are your friends, come to help you. If you are injured, let it be quietly known, and we will take you to safety and comfort." And so, my friends, Jesus moves quietly about from place to place, over the battlefield of life; his heart is full of tears, and his healing touch is full of health, and he calls out of the deep night to injured souls: "I have come for you. O come unto me, all ye that labor and are heavy-laden, and I will give you rest." A very earnest Christian minister was holding a meeting in New England during which he came into conversation with the leading woman in the town, and she told him that she had often been the guest of royalty, and gave the names of kings and queens at whose courts she had been welcomed. She told him also the names of famous people in New York who represented the highest type of social life, where she was often a guest and whom she frequently had as guests in her own house. But she told the minister that in

all the round of social pleasure she had an aching heart. And then the earnest man of God very tenderly presented to her the plan of salvation through Jesus Christ, and she bowed her head, and he thought he detected traces of tears coursing down her cheeks. Finally he said, "Will you accept Jesus as your Savior?" She answered in a whisper, "Yes, I will." Some days after this he had the privilege of meeting her again. She said that all the years that she had devoted purely to pleasure when put over against the few days that she had passed since she had given herself to Jesus Christ were as nothing. She said, "Jesus is mine, pardon is mine, forgiveness is mine."

THE BEAUTIFUL MAN IN THE HEART

"But let it be the hidden man of the heart, in the incorruptible apparel of a meek and quiet spirit, which is in the sight of God of great price."—1 Peter 3: 4.

THERE is an old Eastern allegory which tells the story of a traveler who arrived in a country where the children played at marbles with diamonds, rubies, emeralds, and other precious gems. "These are doubtless the sons of some powerful king," said the traveler, as he bowed respectfully before them. The children, laughing, soon made him perceive that they were only the street boys and that the gems were only the common pebbles of that country. This garden of Peter's in which we are strolling and studying is like that. Whichever way we turn there are beautiful things, thoughts that stir our souls and quicken us to high endeavor. Where could there be a more beautiful sentence describing the superior importance of the invisible inner life over the

outward life than this striking figure, "The hidden man of the heart"?

If you read the entire paragraph connected with the text you will notice that Peter has in mind the temptation to over-adornment in decorating the body. Indeed it was addrest at first specially to women, and Peter uses it as a caution concerning the fashions and manner of dress. Human nature was the same then as it is now; the women liked to look pretty and the men liked to see them that way; for tho the women have to stand the brunt of most that is said about the folly of fashion, I suspect that George Eliot was right when she makes one of her characters in one of her great novels say, "I am not for denying that women are foolish, for God Almighty made them to match men." But Peter uses his caution to point out what is the supremely important thing to both men and women, and that is the true development and perfecting of the real man that lives within.

It is all right to take care of the body, but we must not forget the clothing of the soul which is infinitely more important. Brierly, the English editor, has an essay on "well-

dressed souls." Jesus, speaking to John on the Isle of Patmos, utters warning to some who think they are rich and handsome and fashionably clothed, but are unaware that in the more important realm of the spirit they are naked and poor and ugly. Charles Kingsley said that beauty is worthy of admiration only when it is "the outward sacrament of the beauty of the soul within." And Charles Kingsley was true to that utterance, for as his last breath was passing and his eyes were opening on unseen beauties, he faintly whispered, "How beautiful God is."

I. The first suggestion that springs out of our theme is the importance of soul mastery, the inner self made beautiful and masterful so that the conduct of life may safely come from the hidden man in the heart. Strange that many people wise enough to know that the physical manhood must be kept clean from contamination of evil and from poisonous things fail to understand the infinitely greater importance of keeping the inner man free from the association with evil things that must forever hurt and mar the tenacious spiritual personality. Perhaps there never was an age more

given to this folly than the age we now experience. Night is turned into day, life is turned inside out, and modern fiction with its horrible realism is seeking to make innocence in respect to the worst things in the world impossible even to children. But it is well for us to reflect that the hidden man of the heart with his sensitive plates of memory is vastly happier and stronger by not knowing many of the unnecessary evils of the world. People talk about "seeing life." They mean just out of curiosity to look on the seamy side, the wicked side of worldly life, as tho that were a desirable education and development to character. But there could never be greater folly. The sensitive memory must forever hold the filthy and coarsening influence of pictures of evil, and I have known men redeemed and transformed by the grace of God into wholesome manhood who would give anything if they could burn out of their minds and memories pictures of evil that were received in that way. I say to every young man and young woman, protect the hidden man in the heart from every vicious sight within your power, if you would make him as beautiful as possible. Rudyard Kipling

in one of his virile songs gives utterance to the melancholy regret and despair of men whose minds had been poisoned in their youth.

"We have done with hope and honor, we are lost to love and truth,
We are dropping down the ladder rung by rung,
And the measure of our torment is the measure of our youth,
God help us, for we knew the worst too young."

Young people think that they must "have their fling," as they call it, or life will be monotonous and dull; but I assure you that there is nothing in this world so monotonous and so dull in its ugly misery, after the first flush is gone, as sin. George Arnold makes this very clear in a few lines on "The Lees of Life":

"I have had my will,
Tasted every pleasure,
I have drunk my fill
Of the purple measure,
Life has lost its zest,
Sorrow is my guest,
Oh, the lees are bitter, bitter;
Give me rest.

"Love once filled the bowl,
Running o'er with blisses,
Made my very soul
Drunk with crimson kisses;

But I drank it dry,
Love has passed me by,
Oh, the lees are bitter, bitter;
Let me die."

Peter, with his suggestion of the meek and quiet spirit which is held to be so beautiful and costly a thing in the sight of God, brings to our minds the point at which perhaps more than any other most of us are tempted to be careless, and that is at the point of self-control in our temper. If the hidden man in the heart is beautiful in spirit and has power to master the tongue and the eye, and make them to go quietly along rational and loving channels, then the whole life will be clothed upon with beauty and grace. The folly of uncontrolled temper works such havoc among us that it is strange we do not all join in a campaign against it. Arnold Bennett, an English writer, has recently written a little book entitled *The Human Machine,* in which among other things he discourses with picturesque eloquence on the subject of temper. He compares a man in a temper to a house on fire. You can not put out the fire, you can not help the owner. If you directed his attention to

the flame, he would instantly begin to strike matches, pour on petroleum, and fan the fire, violently resenting interference. You can only stand and watch the flames leap higher and higher. When the ruin is accomplished, the owner curses himself. But there is small satisfaction in that.

A man who loses his temper is simply being burned out. There is a wreck of dignity, of common sense, and justice. Mr. Bennett is convinced that temper can be controlled, and he suggests that as a man in a temper is invariably ridiculous and supremely contemptible, he should be taught to see himself as he is. He advises that he should concentrate regularly and intensely upon the ideas: "When I lose my temper, when I get ruffled, when that mysterious vibration runs through me, I am making a donkey of myself, a donkey, and a donkey. I am behaving like a great baby. I look a fool. I am a spectacle bereft of dignity. Everybody despises me, smiles at me in secret, disdains me, the idiotic ass, with whom it is impossible to reason." Somebody once wrote an essay "On the Advantages of Being a Cantankerous Fool." But Mr. Bennett

brushes these advantages aside with little mercy, and declares that a man with an uncertain temper in the house is a man who goes about with a loaded revolver sticking from his pocket. All consideration for fairness and reason must be subordinated in that house to the fear of the revolver. Therefore such peace as is maintained in that house is often a shameful and an unjust peace.

We are likely to laugh over a discussion of this type, but few things cause more tears in the world, and more hidden aches of the heart that make people old prematurely, and discourage the best endeavor, than the failure of control in the power house within our souls.

II. Christ in the heart is the infallible secret of beauty and serenity of spirit. Some of you have seen and heard that wonderful patriarch of missions, John G. Paton, who planted the gospel in the New Hebrides. His wife died when they were laboring together in a savage island, and had up to that time made practically no converts. The missionary had to dig her grave himself and to lay her there with the dark, hostile faces around him. "If it had not been for Jesus," he says, "and the presence

he vouchsafed me there, I should have gone mad and died beside that lonely grave." But because Jesus dwelt in the hidden man of his heart, he overcame his grief and stood loyally by his work and won those islands from heathenism to Christ and to a beautiful Christian civilization.

These great hidden sorrows that men bury in their breasts through fellowship with him who was "a man of sorrows and acquainted with grief" lift men up and make them great.

"Not for the blazoned sorrows, Lord,
That flaunt their purple in the market-place,
But for grief's fearful, secret sword,
That hides its piercing from the daylight's face,
Pity, I say.

"Not to those ills the world may know,
Nor plaints, whose moanings all the world may hear,
But to the lonely midnight's woe,
That lurks 'neath laughter in the noontide clear,
Give ease to-day.

"Not for those weeping ones, who share
Their tears with others, in a mingled rain,
But for the silent brave, who bear
With smiles their burden of an unguessed pain,
For these I pray."

Jesus said to his friends when he was about to leave them that they were not to be afraid, because they should triumph over the world, "because greater is he that is in you than he that is in the world." And through all the centuries the presence of Christ brings with it that comfort to lonely hearts and pure souls. The world is great, fiercely great; the world is strong, lurid in its strength; the sea of life is torn to white caps by the winds of temptation and struggle, but in the midst of the world and coming across the waves, as he came walking on the sea of Galilee in the storm, Christ brings peace to every soul that truly trusts him. In that land of Gadara he cleansed the poor demon-possest man, who could not control himself, whom the community could not control. When Jesus had taken possession, he went clothed and in his right mind to speak with loving interest to the people who had hitherto feared him. To-day Christ is in the world with the same marvelous power, and what we need and all that we need, to make beautiful in self-control and in peace the hidden man of the heart is that Christ shall dwell there all the while, the honored guest in our

souls. Then the strife and discord shall cease, and the fragrance of his loving presence shall make beautiful the influence that goes forth from us. There is a little poem which I wish every one of us from the depths of our inmost hearts could say to Jesus, as an expression of our consciousness of his presence in us and our gratitude to him:

"As a perfume doth remain
In the folds where it hath lain,
So the thought of *you* remaining
Deeply folded in my brain,
Will not leave me: all things leave me:
You remain.

"Other thoughts may come and go,
Other moments I may know
That shall waft me in their going
As a breath blown to and fro,
Fragrant memories: fragrant memories
Come and go.

"Only thoughts of *you* remain
In my heart where they have lain,
Perfumed thoughts of you remaining,
A hid sweetness in my brain.
Others leave me: all things leave me:
You remain."

III. Our theme impresses me that the reformation and uplift of men, either as individuals

or in the mass of society, can not be accomplished without spiritual transformation. Here is where the reformer who leaves Christ out of account must always fail. Men say, "Give people better homes and better wages, let them have decent clothing and wholesome food, and shorter hours, and a little chance to play, and a breath of nature in air and sky and forest, and you have solved the troublesome problems of humanity." But how foolish all that is in the face of the fact that multitudes of the richest men and women of our time, who have infinite opportunity to play, with automobiles and yachts and the world for a playground, are morally leprous and unclean, and seem to be degraded instead of being uplifted by the prodigal luxury and freedom and riches that have been poured into their lap. Now, I will not give place to any man in my sympathy for the unfortunate and the unjustly treated. I maintain and am always ready to contend that the Golden Rule should apply in the dealing between employer and employee, that every Christian man and woman should be careful to keep the attitude of Jesus Christ and live the life of love without caste or class, until

men everywhere have a fair chance for a healthy, wholesome life in the enjoyment of all the blessings that God bestows upon us in this wonderful world. But let us not be deceived. Sin is just as ugly and as vicious and persistent in a palace as it is in a hovel. The kind of house a man lives in will not determine the character of the hidden man of the heart who lives in his breast and dictates to his spirit and conduct. No, you never can lift men up into the noblest life, whether they are rich or poor, without spiritual transformation that will bring them into fellowship and communion with Christ. Suppose you get absolute justice in the labor world, so that every man and every family have a good house in which to live, wholesome food to eat, and pleasant surroundings, you still have not reached the limits of a man's needs. No, he is a human being, he is a son of God, environed by possibilities that stretch as high as heaven and as deep as hell. He needs a new heart for his work, encouragement in his trials, faith to lift him above temptation, to get out of his mean and sordid spirit even more than he needed to get out of his mean and sordid slum where he formerly lived;

he needs an outlook above and beyond this world of struggle and sorrow. He needs hope, the presence of the living God in his soul, and to feel that he is something more than an animal. He wants a glimpse of heaven and the eternal life. He needs to feel the pulsations of immortality that will give him courage to bear burdens and deny himself for the present that he may have eternal glory in the days to come. There can be no real reformation that is not Christian. If men were only animals like sheep and cattle, the socialist plan of reforming the world would work out all right. But man is too big for the plan. His interests are too far-reaching and too great. The whole atmosphere of the universe with its sunshine and rain, its laughter and tears, its love and hope and fear working together under the brooding tenderness of God, makes it impossible that a human being can live happily in a life like ours and a world like this, without the consciousness of God and the fellowship of Jesus Christ to comfort and strengthen him in the assurance that God means love in the rain as well as the sunshine and that in the mystery of God's providence all things are work-

ing together for good to the man who yields himself to the law of love. Give a man this in the hidden power house of his soul, and he will know that

"The rain that fell a-yesterday is ruby on the roses,
Silver on the poplar leaf, and gold on willow stem;
The grief that chanced a-yesterday is silver that encloses
Holy loves where time and change shall never trouble them.

"The rain that fell a-yesterday makes all the hillside glisten,
Coral on the laurel and beryl on the grass;
The grief that chanced a-yesterday has taught the soul to listen
For whispers of eternity in all the winds that pass."

IV. Our study must lead us inevitably to the conclusion that no outward success, no outward victory, can make up to us for the loss of a beautiful heart fellowship with Jesus Christ that will give to our inner man the traits which belong to heaven. This is only another way of saying what Jesus said, that "a man's life consisteth not in the abundance of the things which he possesseth." The man is more important than the things. And man has not risen to his true glory until the hidden man in the heart, in his free, unrestrained exercise of himself, is beautiful. John Hood in his book,

entitled *The Beauty of God,* says that the law lays its hand upon a man's shoulder and says, "You shall not do wrong." The gospel lays its hand upon his heart, and says, "You shall not want to do wrong." This is the only effectual cure. No law, however stringent; no government, however strong and resolute; no police, however numerous and vigilant, can protect us from the evils that beset us, so long as the heart of man is not pure; for the heart is the fountain from which flow the waters of life. We have never reached our best selves until the impulse at the heart is in harmony with God, when we do right not because we have to, to keep out of jail, but because we are impelled to by a divine compulsion within us. All highest effort comes from that divine compulsion. The great singers, the great painters, sing and paint because they can not help it. There is something within them that must find utterance. An Italian writer finely says of Columbus that "the instinct of the unknown continent burned within him." Cromwell was giving a page out of his own experience when he said, "That man goes farthest who does not know where he is going!" If we are to have

this inner compulsion that will drive us with full steam to the noblest thought and life, it must be because Jesus Christ reigns supreme in us, and our life is hid with him in God. Cherish Christ, make much of him, and he will make much of you. Give him the chief seat at the head of the table, and the life of heaven will already be known in your heart. John Wesley said: "Men talk much of happiness with God in heaven, but the idea of being happy with God on earth never enters their mind." But our only assurance of heaven hereafter is in the heaven begun within our hearts here.

I must not close without a word of invitation to any one who has missed the greatest friendship of life and the greatest privilege of life through failing to know Jesus Christ as his Savior. I must again press home the most important truth you can hear, that Christ is at hand, and that you may, if you will, welcome him here and now unto your comfort, your forgiveness, your eternal peace. Will you receive him? Charles Dickens was very fond of the figure, and uses it again and again in his books, dwelling upon the thought of the multitudes who are coming to meet us as we go on in life

and the fact that we are traveling to meet them. We go forth alone, it may be, and we meet crowds of travelers. Most of them pass by unheeding and unheeded. Some linger for a little; they become our acquaintances, but they soon pass on. They leave little mark on our memory, and they may never come back. With some we may become associated in business or in other ways, but they do not knock at the doors of our heart, or, if they do, we do not give them entrance. There are a few perhaps to whom the door is open, whom we welcome into the inner sanctuary—not many, two or three or a dozen, or it may be twenty, and these dear souls make the great joy of our lives. Compared with these, all the rest sink away into nothing, and the great tragedy of life is when they leave us. But there is one who comes seeking us, knocks at the door of our hearts, cares for us, and, if we will open the door, will come in and dwell with us as our dearest Friend. Other friends may come and go, but he will abide with us forever. He will never leave us because we are sick or poor or in disgrace, but will stand by us and grow more precious and glorious as the years go on. Noth-

ing in life will mean so much to you as to open your heart and let in this great Lover and Friend who will fill your heart with sunshine and your life with his love and peace. Receive him to-day, and he will be with you not only in life, but when you set sail at the eventime he will stand by you and be your pilot into the eternal harbor. In that great hour of transition you will be able to sing:

"My bark is wafted on the strand
By breath divine;
And on the helm there rests a hand
Other than mine.

"One who was known in storms to sail
I have on board;
Above the roaring of the gale
I hear my lord.

"Safe to the land! Safe to the land!
The end is this;
And then with him go hand in hand
Far into bliss."

THE BANISHMENT OF ANXIETY

"Casting all your anxiety upon him, because he careth for you."—1 Peter 5:7.

THE quality as well as the quantity of life work depends so much upon doing it in a buoyant, hopeful spirit; anything that makes us unhappy or disturbs our serenity and robs our hearts of courage becomes an exceedingly serious matter. Anxious care that chafes us and causes us to worry makes it impossible to do our work well. If the step drags and the arm hangs heavy and the eye lacks luster and the heart refuses to anticipate success, it is impossible to do the best work. There is no joy-killer like anxiety; if it is possible for us to banish it, to rise above it, and to live hopefully and cheerfully and with strong confidence, there is nothing that is more worth while. We have a direct command here to cast our anxious care upon God, and the reason given us is that God cares for us enough to take it upon him-

self, and relieve us of it. The thing for us to do is to inquire how we may cast our anxiety upon God.

I. First of all, it will appear eminently true on reflection that to escape anxiety by shifting it on to the divine shoulders can come only through making life large in our estimation of it, large enough to absolve us from the bondage of little and petty things. Some people are willing to believe that life is going to grow into something large and fine, but the present is always petty and small, and so they are always unhappy. They are like the old man who put up several barrels of apples in the fall, and he said his wife carefully picked out every morning for use that day those that were beginning to rot, and so they ate rotten apples all winter. Some people eat rotten apples all their lives—anxious about to-day and expecting to be happy some other time. But happiness is like the manna that God gave the Jews. You can not hoard it up and keep it over to enjoy some other time. If you take it in a large, joyous spirit now, it is yours. But if you wait until to-morrow, it has spoiled on your hands. I never shall forget a call I once made

on an old soldier in Cleveland, Ohio, during his last illness. He was a rare, chivalrous man, who, forty years before, then in the prime of his life, went into the civil war and won his general's stars by heroic service. During all the years he had been a loyal soldier of Jesus Christ. On the occasion of my call he was more than eighty years young, his heart never happier, his face never more cheerful, nor his conversation more inspiring. And I remember that, suddenly, as we talked, he burst out in a joyous tribute of praise to God for the wonderful blessings that had filled his life. He went back to his youth and began with thanksgiving for his parents, and their Christian teaching, and ran over his whole career. But the one thing that lingered in my memory and imprest me most of all was what he said about his children. He said, "The Lord gave me four beautiful children, and what joy and delight they were to me! True, they all died young, only one of them lived to be fifteen years of age, but I enjoyed every minute of them while they lived." That expression of thanksgiving and gladness, that he had enjoyed every moment of his children while

they were alive, imprest me. What a great art it is to learn to enjoy the present and to get all the honey and gladness there is in it. Some people are always finding something to trouble them in the present, and are putting off the enjoyment of their parents or their children or their brothers and sisters or their friends until some other time. But that is to lose the joy of life. It all leaks out day by day, and after a while, when you think the hour for enjoyment is come, the possibility is no longer with you.

Jesus Christ had all the causes for anxiety that any of us can credit to ourselves. He had poverty, and false friends, and cruel enemies, and the certainty that his life was to end in shame and disgrace as far as the world was concerned. Yet he refused to allow any of these things to make him anxious and careworn, and the greatest thing he could say to his friends who had been faithful to him was that he would leave his peace with them. Christ accomplished this because his life was so large and its horizon so great that he refused to allow small things or imaginary things to rob him of his courage or his peace. If you will think for

a moment, you will confess that the things which make you anxious and fill you with worry are petty things—not the big things, but the little things, or the things which never happen.

There is the habit of brooding over supposed slights on the part of our friends. I have been astonished to see intelligent, well-meaning people keep themselves miserable a good part of the time by exaggerating some individual's apparent coldness or indifference toward them. The folly of this is apparent when we consider for a moment that it is nearly always groundless. Who of us have so many friends that we would like to lose one? Nobody wants to drop an old friend, or even an interesting new acquaintance. But oftentimes people are absorbed with other matters when they meet us, and because they pass us by with a hurried nod or a mere wave of the hand, it is folly for us to put the unkindest possible construction on their conduct. Why not put the generous construction on it instead? For in ninety-nine cases out of a hundred the generous construction is warranted.

Another fruitful source of misery is found

in anxiety about health. If there is anything more foolish, I do not know it. Of course, we should take as good care of our health as we can. It has to do with the house in which we live. No man wants the roof to leak while he lives in the house, and the quality of our work is much modified by the character of the house in which we live. But you would think any man a fool who spent all his time doing nothing but take care of his house. So the man is foolish who spends all his time worrying over his body. It is only a temporary house at best, and if he keeps his peace with God he has a much better house waiting for him. So, while we should give a reasonable amount of care to the body, let us see to it that we do not permit rheumatism or distemper to get into the temper.

Another sure way to keep yourself miserable is to worry because you are not in possession of more money. I believe in a reasonable amount of foresight—in a fair attention to insurance, in laying up for a rainy day; but to worry and be anxious and imagine what would happen if the house burned up or the bank burst is the height of folly, rank lack of faith

in God. It is folly because money is not the indispensable condition of happiness. I have seen many rich old people who were miserable, and I have seen many old people who were poor and yet full of an abiding joy and peace that the world could not take away from them.

II. A sure cure for anxiety is to master our thoughts as Jesus did, center them upon high and bright and helpful things. If we do that, we shall be able to cast all anxious cares upon God. Paul has a wonderful recipe for freedom from anxious care which he sets out with great clearness in his letter to the Philippians. "Finally, brethren, whatsoever things are true, whatsoever things are honest, whatsoever things are just, whatsoever things are pure, whatsoever things are lovely, whatsoever things are of good report; if there be any virtue, and if there be any praise, think on these things." And what shall be the result if one does that? Why, Paul says, "And the God of peace shall be with you." The man who follows Paul's injunction is an optimist, and the difference between that man and a pessimist is that the pessimist is all the time thinking about uncomfortable things and things he wishes were dif-

ferent but has no hope that they will be. Dr. Jowett says that such a man is as foolish and wrong-headed as the school-boy who refused to play during the recess hour. As this boy sat, with a discontented look, on a hard, stiff bench, a comrade said, "Why aren't you playing, Jack?" "Catch me playing," said Jack, with a frown, "if I played, then the recess would go too fast."

There is no doubt that we may by determination and by the help of God so master our thoughts that we shall be able to consider and rest upon the high and beautiful and noble and happy things of life.

"Now tell me, throstle, pretty bird,
Wherefore thy merry note
I, too, would sing, but sudden cares
And sorrow stop my throat.—

"'I sing because I'm happy, Sir,
And if it were not so,
I'd sing to make me happy, Sir;
And that is all I know.'—

"Ah well, but if the lady-bird
Who hears thy throbbing note,
Were cold as winter, would thy song,
Freeze not within thy throat?—

"'I'd sing and thaw her bosom, Sir,
And if it were not so,
I'd sing and thaw my sorrow, Sir;
And that is all I know.'"

Some people, and they are often the most genuine and devoted, rob themselves and others of the joy and strength they might have if they only understood the duty of being glad and cheerful. They feel so keenly the responsibility which rests upon them and so conscientiously try to bear all of the burdens of life that belong to them that they fail to take the joy God intends for them, and so miss much in power and usefulness. I have seen recently the story of a good woman, one of those lovely souls whom we call "saints on earth." Her whole life had been full of burden-bearing and helpfulness to all around her. When she came near to the end, one by one her friends were summoned to her bedside to receive her farewell blessing, and they all felt as they left her that they had been on holy ground.

One day her niece, who cared for her, said, "Oh, Aunt, what a wonderful thing it is that you can look back over your long life and find

that there is absolutely nothing you have ever done that could cause you regret."

The dear old lady smiled a little sadly, and said, "But there are things I regret."

"You, Aunt!" cried her niece, incredulously. "What could you find to regret?"

"I regret," she replied, "the good times I might have had and did not." And that was a true cause for regret.

Many fail of the strength and courage to make life its best because through failure to master their thoughts they allow them to rest anxiously on the future and fear the goblin shapes that come up and leer at them out of the mystery of the days that are to come. What folly is that! When the future comes, if it does come, we shall need to be at our best; to worry about it and lose sleep through our anxiety over it will only unfit us for the struggle when it comes. To do to-day's work as best we can, to accept to-day's blessings as the special gift of God, and rejoice in them as an omen and a token of the good things that are to come, fits us for to-morrow and the day after. Some poet has the right idea when he sings

"Sure, this world is full of trouble—
I ain't said it ain't:
Lord! I've had enough, an' double,
Reason for complaint.
Rain an' storm have come to fret me,
Skies were often gray;
Thorns an' brambles have beset me
On the road—but say,
Ain't it fine to-day!

"What's the use of always weepin',
Makin' trouble last?
What's the use of always keepin'
Thinkin' of the past?
Each must have his tribulation,
Water with his wine,
Life, it ain't no celebration.
Trouble? I've had mine—
But to-day is fine!

"It's to-day that I am livin',
Not a month ago;
Havin', losin', takin', givin',
As time wills it so.
Yesterday a cloud of sorrow
Fell across the way;
It may rain again to-morrow,
It may rain—but, say,
Ain't it fine to-day!"

III. If we are to cast all our cares upon God and thus banish anxiety, we must perfectly trust his love, his leadership, and his guidance. I have read that in the wilds of

Africa they have found a vine on which grows a small berry, about the size of a cranberry, which has a peculiar effect, when eaten, of changing the taste so that all sour things seem sweet. After a few hours the taste becomes natural again, but during that time all acids are sweet to the taste. When the natives find this berry they eat some of them, and then fill themselves with the sourest fruits they can find, getting the same enjoyment as from the sweetest and rarest and most delicious.

Confidence in God and the assurance that he means the best for us causes us to make the best of everything, to look upon the bright side of things, and to ignore, when possible, disagreeable things. It is like that African taste berry and assures a sweet taste in the mouth all the while. The man who has the infinite God to rely on can afford cheerfulness. Dr. Joseph Parker was once at a club dinner where one of the speakers foolishly asserted that Christianity had done very little for mankind; that he, for his part, believed that gas had been a greater benefactor than Christianity. Hisses and cries of "shame" came from all over the house. But Dr. Parker, a guest of the evening, quietly

arose and said, "Hush! Do not quarrel with our friend. He is simply stating his belief. Now I, when I am nearing my latter end, will call for the consolations of the Christian religion. But our friend here, on his death-bed will call for the gas-man." Men who have no God may consistently have the blues and be eaten by anxiety; but we who have come to trust God and love him ought to rest ourselves in him. His fatherhood, his motherhood, he has pledged to us in a thousand promises, and he can not fail any heart that rests in his arms.

"He shall give his angels charge
Over thee in all thy ways.
Though the thunders roam at large,
Though the lightning round me plays,
Like a child I lay my head
In sweet sleep upon my bed.

"Though the terror come so close,
It shall have no power to smite
It shall deepen my repose,
Turn the darkness into light.
Touch of angels' hands is sweet;
Not a stone shall hurt my feet.

"All thy waves and billows go
Over me to press me down
Into arms so strong, I know
They will never let me drown.
Ah, my God, how good thy will!
I will nestle and be still."

But I can imagine some sincere and earnest listener, hedged about by some perplexing situation, saying to me: "Yet how can I help being anxious when I see life passing and the thing that has seemed most important to me, to which my heart has gone out, and for which I have been led to pray to God through long months and years, is failing of achievement, and my prayers seem to be unanswered and my project doomed only to failure?" I would say to any such earnest soul that God deals with us as with children. We are his children, and if we are faithful to him and lovingly rest our will upon his will, he will in the best way, and with the noblest results, do the best thing that can be done for us, and for all those upon whom our hearts are set. It may not be in our way, but he who knows everything will do the best. I have read the story of a young woman, a sincere and beautiful woman, who had consecrated herself to the work of Christian mis-

sions and was to go out to India. But before she went, an accident disabled her mother, and the journey had to be postponed. For three years she ministered to her mother, until the mother died, leaving as her last request that before going to India, the daughter should go and visit her sick sister in the far West. She went, intending to sail for India immediately on her return; but she found the sister dying of a lingering illness and without proper attention; and once more she waited until the end came. Again her face was turned eastward when the sister's husband suddenly died, and five orphan children, all of them young, had no soul on earth to care for them but herself. "No more projects for going to the heathen," she wrote to a friend, "this lonely household is my mission." She was greatly disappointed, but cheerfully submitted to the will of God and set herself with loving devotion to do a mother's service for those children. Fifteen years she devoted to them, and in her forty-fifth year God showed her the key to the mystery of her unanswered prayers, and revealed to her why he had held her back from India, as she laid her hand in blessing on the heads of

three of these young people whom she had mothered, ere they sailed as missionaries to the land whither, twenty years before, she had proposed to go. Her broken plan had been replaced by a larger and a better one. She could not go, but three went in her stead: a three hundred per cent interest for twenty years.

Such revelations of God's guidance and leading—and the whole story of mankind is full of them—ought to teach us all to pray:

> "Teach me to feel that thou art always nigh;
> Teach me the struggles of the soul to bear,
> To check the rising doubt, the rebel sigh;
> Teach me the patience of unanswered prayer."

THE SORROWS OF A TANGLED SOUL

"For if, after they have escaped the defilements of the world through the knowledge of the Lord and Savior Jesus Christ, they are again entangled therein and overcome, the last state is become worse with them than the first."—2 Peter 2: 20.

THIS theme has to deal with the sorrows of people who have known the better way and have strayed from it, people who have escaped from the condemnation of their sins and have been made free from the bondage of sinful habit, and have again yielded to temptations that have brought them anew into the entanglements that come to every one who turns his face away from God and righteousness and is caught in the meshes of the evil net. The backsliding Christian does not get his troubles in the Lord's service. It is when he deserts and turns from his duty that his danger and his difficulties come. The old shepherd who offered prayer in a Welsh revival meeting put it exactly right when he lamented his backslidings

in these words: "Lord, I got among the thorns and briars, and was scratched and torn and bleeding; but, Lord, it is only fair to say that it was not on thy ground; I had wandered out of thy pasture." And there are many others whose scars were obtained in the devil's service, outside the field where duty called them. I have talked with a great many backsliders, and I have never found one yet that was not ready to admit that the true service of God was not at fault. All the trouble came from wandering away from God, and turning again to worldliness.

I. Peter especially refers to certain tangles where the backsliding Christian is under peculiar temptation of being caught and destroyed. One of these is covetousness. A man who is determined to have a great deal of this world's goods at no matter what cost to his soul, or the souls of his fellow men, can not be a Christian. Jesus Christ recognized this very clear distinction when he said, "Seek ye first the kingdom of God and his righteousness, and all these things shall be added unto you." By "these things" was meant clothing and food and the necessary measure of worldly success. But

the distinction had to be made definite. To be a Christian at all, God must be first. And Christ puts it still more clearly when he says in so many words, "Ye can not serve God and mammon." Mammon, there, stands for the world, for physical success of every type, and Jesus says if you are going to follow him, if you are going to be a Christian at all, mammon must take a back seat. God and Christ must be first and must have control. Watts, one of the greatest painters of the last century, had a great picture entitled "Mammon." It reveals an immense figure clad in complete armor of gold. His visor is down so that he has not even eyes to see as he rides resistlessly forward on a fierce steed, carrying curses rather than blessings to those represented on the crowded canvas. Helpless before the feet of the advancing steed lies "Love" dead amid the roses, for money often kills true affection, as many an unhappy marriage testifies. Close by lies a soldier, wounded and dying, whom a nurse seeks in vain to protect from those death-bringing hoofs—for war is Mammon's servant, and by its ruthless cruelty men have been killed in millions. Beside the way, sadly dejected,

may be seen representatives of Music, Poetry, and Painting, all of which are counted nothing in comparison with money when Mammon rules the land. Behind the awful figure is Justice, carrying scales, but alas! they are all awry, and bearing a sharp glittering sword which will strike recklessly, because the eyes of Justice are bandaged. And at the back of all these is Death. The picture is a startling reminder of the Scriptural declaration, that "the love of money is the root of all evil." When men get caught in the snarl of covetousness they will sacrifice the noblest part of their nature, harden themselves against appeals to their sympathy, spurn love and duty, and sell their very souls for gold. Perhaps more people in the church need to be on their guard and always watchful at this point than at any other. It is not only rich people who are covetous. Many people who are always poor still die spiritually of covetousness. Let us make God first in our worship and love and devotion, and then, whatever worldly goods we possess, we will possess them and they will not possess us—which is a very different thing. Some men own their business; other men are owned by

their business, and they are only slaves. Peter is calling for Christians who shall keep themselves clear of the net of covetousness and accept with love and thanksgiving, as so many good gifts from God, all the blessings that come in the physical world.

Peter uses Balaam as an illustration of a man who was a prophet of God, a man who had many good impulses and many good desires. He wanted to be a good man, and he hoped to die a good man. But he was covetous and had a great love for money; he wanted to be good and enjoy all the perquisites of goodness and yet get a share in the wages of unrighteousness. There are many like him now—men who want to have the influence of the Church, who want to carry the good name of the Church, to have the help for their families which it will bring, who hope after the struggles of life are over to die good men; yet they are trying to get money and success by methods which they know will not stand the light of the Ten Commandments and will not bear the blazing light of the great white throne. They are like Balaam. They want to be nominal Christians and, at least in the end, real

Christians; as Balaam said, so say they: "Let me die the death of the righteous, and let my last end be like his." Yet like Balaam they are ready for any shady intrigue that will get them money by any method that will leave them out of the penitentiary. The Church of Jesus Christ to-day is not only not helped by these men but is tremendously handicapped by them. Many a man controls an official board and makes his pastor tremble with fear who imagines that because he has a long bank account and puts a good deal of money into the Church treasury he therefore is necessary to the Church. In many places these men are the damnation of the Church and are doing infinitely more harm than good; if the Church could purge itself of them there would be such a revival and such a turning of the great masses of the toiling multitudes to Christ that the day of Pentecost would be eclipsed and forgotten as the golden age of Christianity. Now every individual is in danger of the peculiar temptations of his own time, and every one needs to be on guard not to allow this craze for worldly success and this confidence in worldly things

to take the place of God and Christ and the great spiritual realities in heart and life.

II. Another net which Peter esteems to be peculiarly dangerous, even to those who have escaped the pollutions of the world, is the lust for uncleanness of life, the dangerous temptations that come from the flesh. Observation and history show us that no purity, no innocence, no established character for goodness, render a man or woman immune from the common temptations which belong to humanity. Adam and Eve were innocent, but they were tempted and yielded. Jesus Christ was infinitely pure and innocent, and yet he was tempted with tremendous and real temptation, and overcame by the grace of God within him. David reveals one of the sweetest and purest young lives characterized in the Bible. Nothing could be finer than his boyhood as a shepherd lad on the hills of Bethlehem. Nothing could be more heroic and splendid than his early life as a soldier. Nothing could be more devoted to God, more thoroughly faithful and true, than his life in the wilderness when he was in exile with a price on his head and suffered all manner of hardship and danger and

trying experiences. But after a while, when he had been long king, had much wealth, and had become drunk with power, and all things went his way, luxury and riches and ease and indulgence weakened his moral fiber, blinded him to his obligation to God, his feet were caught in the net of uncleanness, and he sinned grievously against God. For a long time he seemed deaf to all warning and reproof. He sinned blindly and did not seem to suffer greatly from it. And then there came the day when God sent Nathan to him, and that brave man stood before the king and painted the picture of another sinner who had sinned just as David sinned. And David, looking at himself in the other man, was filled with wrath and indignation and declared that the sinning man should die. Then Nathan cried, "Thou art the man!" And in a moment David's heart was riven as by a lightning's flash, and his sinfulness and uncleanness was revealed to him, and the grievousness of his sin against God weighed upon his conscience until he wept and cried aloud, "I have sinned against the Lord"; and because of his true repentance

God turned away his sin and cleansed his heart and gave him a new chance.

Beware of the beginnings of evil. Beware of permitting in the imagination that which may grow into uncleanness which will destroy.

Dr. J. Wilbur Chapman was in the offices of the Southern Pacific Railway in San Francisco when the General Passenger Agent asked him if he had seen the big trees of California. He informed him that he had seen them as he looked from the car window the day before, and, smiling, the railroad man said, "Then you have not seen them, for they must be studied to be appreciated." Calling for his secretary, he stretched out before Dr. Chapman a measuring line, and went on to tell him, "I have measured one of the big trees of California. Its circumference is 105 feet, its diameter 35 feet, and the height was so great that one would hesitate to suggest it to those who have never looked on such a forest." Then he said to Chapman, "How large would you think the seed of such a big tree might be?" And when he suggested that it ought to be of enormous size, the railroad man poured out in the palm of his hand a number of its little

seeds, and they were smaller than a lettuce seed. So it is with the sin of uncleanness of soul. An evil imagination encouraged, an impure thought harbored, an unholy ambition controlling, and the work is begun, but the end no human tongue can describe. Keep mind and heart clean from impure thoughts.

III. Then here is another group which seemed to Peter to be a group of evil things likely to tempt the Christian away from his safe path, such as self-will, and presumption, and lack of reverence. These things may seem very little at the start, but if allowed to continue and grow they tangle the soul and it stumbles to destruction. The worst ruin and the largest death-roll in the history of Vesuvius, the great volcano of Italy which stands guard over the Bay of Naples, was not caused by the fiery lava in its rushing streams, but by the continual dropping, hour after hour, of a drifting rain of ashes from the crater. They darkened the air so that fleeing for safety was difficult; they broke down the roofs by their accumulated weight, and filled the houses; they choked the lungs; they covered the fields; killed all the crops; and left the land ruined

for years. So in life it is not the sudden, tremendous sins that most ruin the soul. It is the insidious growth of selfishness and irreverence and carelessness that brings ruin upon so many Christian people. Henry Drummond says that the whole nature of man is built up of cells. One after another, good and bad, all things have become part of him. His sins have made sin a part of him. The unkind thing you say or do makes you an unkind character. That selfish thing you do makes you selfish, pure and holy and noble thoughts are expelled and you become an animal. Paul says, "Wretched man that I am! Who shall deliver me from this dead body?" Chained as they were in those dark dungeons of the East, if one prisoner died he was left chained to the man next to him. "This dead body"—it was sin. But we are making dead bodies with our own hands and lives, cell by cell we become dead. Sin is a part of one and the end of these things is death, and all of a sudden some morning we awake and say, "Wretched man that I am, who shall deliver me from this dead body?"

There is a Northern legend, told in one of

Hall Caine's books, of a man who thought he was pursued by a monster. His grain stacks were fired, his barns were unroofed, his cattle destroyed, his lands blasted, his first-born slain. So he lay in wait for the monster where he thought it lived in the chasms near his house, and in the darkness of night he saw it. With a cry he rushed upon it, and gripped it about the waist, and it turned upon him, and held him by the shoulder. Long he wrestled with it, reeling, staggering, falling and rising again; but at length a flood of strength came to him, and he overthrew it, and stood over it, covering it, conquering it with its back against his thighs and his hands set hard at its throat. Then he drew his knife to kill it, and the moon shot through a break in the clouds, opening an alley of light about him, and he saw its face, and lo! the face of the monster was his own. Let us not fail of the great message. We need fear nothing but ourselves. No one can harm us but ourselves. But if we yield to selfishness and irreverence and covetousness and uncleanness, we shall be changed into the incarnation of evil which will mean death in life. With what virile power Kipling sings:

"And because we know we have breath in our mouth and
think we have thought in our head,
We shall assume that we are alive, whereas we are really
dead.
The lamp of our youth will be utterly out: but we shall
subsist on the smell of it,
And whatever we do, we shall fold our hands and suck our
gums and think well of it,
Yes, we shall be perfectly pleased with our work, and that
is the perfectest hell of it!"

IV. I have no doubt that some of you who have been listening to me, conscious of tangled feet and loss of the bright hope and the joyous fellowship of the Christian life you once knew, are saying "I would I knew the way out of the tangle!" No doubt some are ready to say with the poet:

"I wish that there were some wonderful place
Called the Land of Beginning Again,
Where all our mistakes and all our heartaches
And all of our poor, selfish grief
Could be dropped, like a shabby old coat, at the door,
And never put on again.

"I wish we could come on it all unaware,
Like the hunter that finds a lost trail;
And I wish that the one whom our blindness had done
The greatest injustice of all
Could be at the gates, like an old friend that waits
For the comrade he's gladdest to hail.

"We would find all the things we intended to do,
But forgot, and remembered—too late,
Little praises unspoken, little promises broken,
And all of the thousand and one
Little duties neglected that might have perfected
The day for one less fortunate.

"It wouldn't be possible not to be kind
In the Land of Beginning Again;
And the ones we misjudged and the ones whom we grudged
Their moments of victory here
Would find in the grasp of our loving handclasp
More than penitent lips could explain.

"For what had been hardest we'd know had been best,
And what had seemed loss would be gain,
For there isn't a sting that will not take wing
When we've faced it and laughed it away;
And I think that the laughter is most what we're after
In the Land of Beginning Again.

"So I wish that there were some wonderful place
Called the Land of Beginning Again,
Where all our mistakes and all our heartaches
And all of our poor, selfish grief
Could be dropped, like a shabby old coat, at the door,
And never put on again."

Thank God, there is a Land of Beginning Again. And it is here and now, not to-morrow, not some other time, not some special time, but now. To-day is the day of salvation. If you will hear his voice, harden not your heart.

V. But to the great mass of us the supreme question is, How may I keep from getting entangled again in the evil net of worldliness which is always being laid for my feet? And I think there can be only one answer to that, and that is, that man is safe who is earnestly engaged in doing his Master's will and fighting the good fight of the kingdom in fellowship with Jesus Christ. Paul says, "Walk in the spirit and ye shall not fulfill the lusts of the flesh." Have your hands full and your heart full of your duty to God and men, and you shall not only live blameless but you shall live helpful lives. We need fighting saints—saints that stir the world up and make it better. The trouble with many saints is that they are too goody-goody. A telegram was received by the English Government in London a while ago which read as follows: "A saint has appeared in the Valley of the Swats, but the police are after him." We need more saints that stir up a fight. The great saints of history, the men we laud and admire, about whom we write poems and paint pictures and mold statues, to whom we build monuments, made it very uncomfortable for

many people while they were alive. They were fighters; saints, but fighters—men like Moses, who "slew the Egyptian"; like Joshua, who "left not one of them alive"; like Caleb, who, on his eighty-fifth birthday, begged for the town where the giants of Anak lived, so that he would have a good fight cleaning them out instead of a nice quiet section for his share; men like Luther, who was always with his back to the wall in a fight; like John Knox, who a wicked queen declared was worth more than an army of common men; men like Abraham Lincoln and Savonarola, and multitudes I might name, of whom the world was not worthy. Saints they were, God's men, who kept the air of the earth so cleansed that men could live in it and breathe in it, who lifted the world a little more into the sunlight of liberty and righteousness, and made humanity better. These are the sort of saints the world needs these days. And theirs is the way to save your soul and keep yourself from being entangled. Put yourself into the thick of the fight for righteousness in your community and count yourself a soldier of Jesus Christ against everything he hates and in behalf of everything he

loves. At one of the meetings of the American Board, Dr. A. J. Lyman of Brooklyn told how a little while before Henry Ward Beecher went away they were walking the street together at night, and Beecher suddenly turned to Lyman and said: "Well, Lyman, I suppose they will lay me in Greenwood some of these days; but God knows I won't stay there." And Dr. Lyman says that he turned to Beecher and asked: "Where may we expect to find you, Mr. Beecher?" The great preacher threw back his head with a shake, like a lion tossing his mane, and exclaimed: "Where? Why, somewhere in the thick of things for my country and my Christ." If you want to live a pure life and a happy life and keep your soul free and unentangled, thrust yourself into the thick of things wherever duty calls you for faithful service. Jesus Christ who redeemed you is looking to you for service:

"He is counting on you!
On a love that will share
In his burden of prayer,
For the souls he has bought
With his life-blood, and sought
Through his sorrow and pain
To win "home" yet again.

He is counting on you;
If you fail him—
What then?

"He is counting on you!
Oh, the wonder and grace
To look Christ in the face
And not be ashamed,
For you gave what he claimed,
And you laid down your all
For his sake—at his call.
He is counting on you;
And you failed not.
What then?"

THE FREEDOM OF THE CITY OF GOD

"For thus shall be richly supplied unto you the entrance into the eternal kingdom of our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ."—2 Peter 1:11.

SOMETIMES in Great Britain, when it is desired to show the highest possible honor to a great man who has dared much and achieved largely for humanity, there is given what is considered one of the highest honors that can be bestowed among English-speaking peoples, and that is the freedom of the city of London. Only here and there one has been so honored, and always it has been some splendid personality who, because of noble traits of character and wonderful achievement against odds, is deemed worthy by the common consent of the people to receive this rare recognition. I had that in mind when I chose my theme after studying the text. In the higher realm, the realm of the spirit, Peter sees and depicts the man who is worthy of the freedom of the in-

visible but eternal and imperishable city of God. In the paragraph of which the text is the climax Peter sets forth the kind of personality which insures so glorious an honor. It is a wonderful paragraph, worthy of being written on our minds and hearts forever: "Grace to you and peace be multiplied in the knowledge of God and of Jesus our Lord; seeing that his divine power hath granted unto us all things that pertain unto life and godliness, through the knowledge of him that called us by his own glory and virtue; whereby he hath granted unto us his precious and exceeding great promises; that through these ye may become partakers of the divine nature, having escaped from the corruption that is in the world by lust. Yea, and for this very cause, adding on your part all diligence, in your faith supply virtue; and in your virtue knowledge; and in your knowledge self-control; and in your self-control patience; and in your patience godliness; and in your godliness brotherly kindness; and in your brotherly kindness love. For if these things are yours and abound, they make you to be not idle nor unfruitful unto the knowledge of our Lord Jesus Christ. For he that lack-

eth these things is blind, seeing only what is near, having forgotten the cleansing from his own sins. Wherefore, brethren, give the more diligence to make your calling and election sure: for if ye do these things, ye shall never stumble; for thus shall be richly supplied unto you the entrance unto the eternal kingdom of our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ." In this wonderful paragraph we have Peter's inspired vision of how a poor, sinful man, without merit and without resources in himself, comes by the grace of God through the forgiveness of his sin and the fellowship with his Savior to such a personality that he is not only fitted to dwell with the good, but is in the very nature of things given an abundant entrance, a glorious welcome, into the eternal kingdom where Christ is Lord over all. It may be that Peter had in his mind some final reference to heaven, but there is every indication that the primary reference is to the entrance into the invisible spiritual kingdom, both on earth and in heaven. For, as Maltbie Babcock has beautifully said, salvation is not putting a man into heaven, but putting heaven into a man. It is not putting a sinful man into a law-abiding

community, but writing the law of God in his heart and mind. The real question is not, "What will he do under outward compulsion?" but, "What will he do by inward choice?" Salvation is not the change of circumstances, but that central change in us, that change of the heart, of its attitude, its intentions, its choices, that will make it the conqueror under all circumstances in the battles of life.

After this introduction it seems to me it will be interesting and profitable to note some of the characteristics which Peter discerned in this triumphant personality who is given the freedom of the city of God in this world and in all worlds where God may lead him. For such a soul does not need to worry about heaven. He carries heaven with him. Milton makes Satan cry "I myself am hell, whithersoever I fly is hell," and old Father Taylor, of the Seamen's Bethel in Boston, when somebody exprest a doubt to him as to whether Emerson would reach heaven, declared in his vital way, "If Emerson goes to hell, he will change the climate and turn immigration that way." This was his picturesque way of saying that the good sage of Concord dwelt in

the kingdom of God and abode constantly in heaven.

I. In Peter's vision the man who has the freedom of the heavenly city is first of all a man of faith. He is a man of the long vision who sees spiritual things. I have seen somewhere the story of a literary woman who consulted an oculist concerning an ailment of her eyes. Upon examination the physician said, "Madam, your eyes are simply tired; you need to rest them." "But," said she in reply, "this is impossible; my engagements are such that I must use them." After reflecting for a moment he asked, "Have you any wide views from your home?" "Oh, yes," she answered with enthusiasm; "from the front porch I can look out upon a glorious range of mountains." "Very well," replied the oculist; "that is just what you need. When your eyes feel tired, look steadily at your mountains for ten minutes—twenty would be better; the far look will rest your eyes." And it is the "far look" that is the remedy for weary hearts as well as tired eyes. David understood it when he said, "I will lift up mine eyes unto the hills, from whence cometh my help." The eye of faith

looking on the high hills of God cools the fitful fever of worldliness; if we would fit ourselves for abundant harmony in the spiritual kingdom, we must keep alive and buoyant the power of faith in our souls. Percy Ainsworth, the young Wesleyan genius, who went to heaven too early for the earth's needs, says that the Church has sometimes tried to impress the world by her material resources or by her political influence. She has competed with the financier and the diplomatist for the prize of power. And she has failed, as it was utterly right and inevitable that she should fail. She has been the home of learning, and the mother of the best civilization; but it is not even for these things that her children love her, nor is it for these things that the world at last will do her honor. Her real work to the world has always consisted in this, that she has kept the music of the pilgrim song ringing in men's hearts, making it impossible for them to settle down to the gain and comfort of the hour, easily forgetful of the venture of faith, the crusade of righteousness, and the pilgrimage of love. She has roused life's truest wanderthirst in a world too ready to be content with

the thing that is nearest, to take the obvious and immediate for its portion and its prize, and try to build a comfortable house when there is scarcely time to pitch a tent. Faith in God and in Christ, in immortality, in our own spiritual possibilities, keeps alive the adventurous "wander-thirst" in our souls and makes us true crusaders for a better world and a nobler life among men.

II. Peter teaches us that this man of faith must develop into a man of spiritual achievement. You may find taught in these assurances that to the faith will be added virtue, and temperance or self-control, and patience, and knowledge or experience—qualities which taken together always mean achievement. That word "virtue," as Peter uses it, is a little different from its ordinary meaning of general excellence and goodness. The Latin word *vir* means a man or a hero; and the Latin word *virtus* meant the special quality of man or hero. Virtue, to the Latins, meant, thus, the quality of manhood or heroism. Virtue and manliness were practically synonymous words. To be manly was to be virtuous; to be virtuous was to be manly. So that, as Peter uses it,

we may take it to mean efficiency. It is faith in energetic action. I think modern athletes have a little word that just expresses what Peter means by the word virtue, as he uses it here. It is a little word you will find on the sporting page of the newspaper, telling about track meets and athletic things generally—the little word "pep." I often hear young fellows talking about a man and saying he might do big things in athletics if only he had more "pep" in him, and again I hear them say he doesn't look as if he has the strength of the other man, but he has more "pep" than any fellow you ever saw, indicating that it was not so much the man's size or appearance as it was that quality of "pep" that made him successful and triumphant. Now Peter is saying to us that the man of faith must have added to it spiritual "pep," that will make him efficient and powerful to do things in the spiritual world. Robert W. Service sings in the style of Kipling a very picturesque and virile song entitled, "The Law of the Yukon."

"This is the law of the Yukon, and ever she makes it plain;
'Send not your foolish and feeble; send me your strong and
your sane—

Strong for the red rage of battle; sane, for I harry them sore;
Send me men girt for the combat, men who are grit to the core;
Swift as a panther in triumph, fierce as the bear in defeat,
Sired of a bulldog parent, steeled in the furnace heat,
Send me the best of your breeding, lend me your chosen ones;
Them will I take to my bosom, them will I call my sons;
Them will I gild with my treasure, them will I glut with my meat;
But the others—the misfits, the failures—I trample under my feet.' "

Now the law of the spirit is like the law of the Yukon. If we are to win victories for God and to be worthy of abundant entrance into the spiritual kingdom, we must abound in this virile spiritual virtue. I have been reading recently a discussion on *Spiritual Invalidism,* by Ambrose Shepherd, in which he says some very interesting things, among others this:

"All men who are responsible for their actions have some amount of mental life, but in one man it may scarcely amount to strength enough to appear as an intelligent animal, while in another it rises to genius and writes *Hamlet* or *Paradise Lost.*"

The same is true in physical life. You meet a man to-morrow morning, and the sight of him sends a rush of pity to your heart. He

has just life enough to go as a mourner around the streets. Every effort with him is toil that tells, and as he looks in your face you drop your gaze; it is like looking into the face of the dying. You meet another man, and if you are not very well in yourself, his buoyancy as he swings past you is almost oppressive, he seems so packed with vitality that his exuberance is positively irritating; everything about him seems a kind of unspoken challenge, "How I do enjoy life: Don't you?" Now, what is the difference between these two men? One man has life, just enough to keep him out of his coffin, but the other has it abundantly. Exactly so is it with this other and higher life of the spirit. The truth is, very few of us have up to our privilege this great strong thing which is above all else the insignia to the world of our fellowship with Christ. What we all, as Christian men and women, need is the life "more abundant," the fulness of the Spirit; we need the infusion of something which Henry Drummond was so fond of saying was unlike anything else in nature, that which constitutes the separate kingdom of Christ and gives to Christianity its strange and unique

character. The anointing which the early Church had was in no sense of the word a natural gift. Yet it was a gift which can be added to each of us, if, with surrender to God and complete wholeness of purpose, we give ourselves to his service. Jesus Christ came that we might have life and that we might have it more abundantly, and every one of us may have this virtue, these divine graces of self-control and patience and experience, that will crown us with spiritual achievement.

III. Now Peter says that this man of faith who gives himself up to spiritual achievement should become a godly man by adding godliness to these things which he has. James Hastings, the great English scholar, thinks it is significant that Peter placed this characteristic of godliness so far along in his description of this triumphant Christian personality. He calls attention to the fact that in the beginnings of the Christian life men are almost sure to be prayerful, but that when they have reached somewhat of excellency, when their will is disciplined and pure desires are theirs, when they are at home in the study of the gospels, when they are self-possest and patient, there is great

danger of suffering from undevoutness. All their efforts are directed to self-culture and they cease to pray. They have acquired power over themselves and think less of God's help. From this come barrenness and weakness. Gradually a change is evident; their hearts grow hard, self-consciousness and pride destroy the sweetness of their life. For want of heavenly motive they are impatient; for want of heavenly aim they are self-indulgent. And so we often see most excellent people undergoing this sad and serious change. The want of godliness is fatal to spiritual advancement. It was observation of this sort of lack that led Robert Louis Stevenson to say about a man, "I will think more of his prayers when I see in him the spirit of praise." And again: "I don't call that by the name of religion which fills a man with the bile of bitterness." If with watchful hearts we hold ourselves to reverent and devout lives, sensitive to the presence of God and our need of him, prayer will be as imminent with us and as constant as conversation with our friends. If you want to see a good illustration of this, read those wonderful letters of Paul which are contained in the New Testa-

ment, and see the marvelous range of his prayers. He carried everything to God with perfect naturalness. If he wanted to reach a man and change his heart, he thought the quickest way to do it was to pray for him. I have seen somewhere the story of a man in a newspaper office in Fleet Street, London. He belonged to the *Scotsman* newspaper and the office in Fleet Street was connected with the central office in Edinburgh by private telephone. There were two men in the London office, and one was left in charge while the other went out to collect news from a news agency. When he came back, he found that he had left the key of the ground floor door in his overcoat pocket. He made a noise on the door, but, getting no response from the man six stories up, thought that he must have fallen asleep. He thought at first of going up the fire-escape, but found that was not practicable. So he went to a long-distance telephone office, and telephoned to Edinburgh, and asked them to wake up the man in the London office. The people in the *Scotsman* office in Edinburgh rang up, and the man in the office in London, said, "What is the matter?" The answer was,

"So-and-so is down-stairs in Fleet Street; go down and let him in." So the quickest way into that office was around by Edinburgh. I remember something like that at the time of the great blizzard in 1888, when for a week many large business transactions were carried on between New York and Boston by the roundabout way of London and Halifax. And so it is true that often the quickest way to the hearts of the people walking by our side is by way of heaven. God help us that we may not fail of that loving reverence and profound appreciation that shall hallow our hearts and thoughts and lives with the grace of godliness.

IV. This triumphant Christian manhood, according to Peter, will also have the grace of brotherly love. Of course this brotherly love is the very essence of Christianity. John Watson, or, as he was better known, "Ian Maclaren," used to have the habit, whenever he had a holiday, of worshiping in some strange place, and often in some very small and humble chapel where he would be unknown. One day he went to a Wesleyan chapel where a lay preacher, an old farmer, occupied the pulpit, and he was greatly imprest with what the old

man said at the close of his discourse. He said, "Why do I preach Sunday after Sunday? Because I can not eat my bread alone." And Ian Maclaren said that he counted that one of the greatest conclusions to a sermon that he had ever heard—He could not eat his bit of bread alone. That is the true spirit of Christianity. Christ puts a tremendous emphasis on brotherly love when he tells us that whatever we do of good or ill to our brother, he takes as tho we had treated him in the same way. Every bit of good we do to anybody we do to Jesus, and every bit of harm we do to anybody we do to Jesus. That was a tremendous thing that Rattenbury, the successor of Hugh Price Hughes, said, "If you betray a man, you are a Judas, even if the man be John Smith and not Jesus Christ of Nazareth."

V. On one occasion when Colonel Roosevelt was leaving the platform where he had spoken to a great mass of people, a young man met him with a book and a fountain pen, and asked for the Colonel's autograph. Mr. Roosevelt begged to be excused and pushed toward the cloakroom. As he got into his overcoat there stood the young man again with book and pen,

begging the Colonel's signature. Seizing them both, the Ex-President started to write his name. The pen would not work, and dropping it, Roosevelt in characteristic style, exclaimed "Shucks: You have no ink in your pen." The young man lost the coveted autograph through lack of diligence in preparing for it. There is pathos and tragedy in that illustration when we lift it up to higher things. Men are failing to achieve for God because they go with slack hands and lack of diligence in the things that belong to the kingdom. Dr. Jowett speaks with great insight when he declares the need of method in our religion. We must find out the best means, he says, of kindling the spirit of praise and of engaging in quick and ceaseless communion with God. And then we must steadily adhere to these as a business man adheres to well-tested systems in commercial life. We must bring alertness into our religion. We must watch with all the keenness of an open-eyed speculator, and we must be intent upon "buying up every opportunity" for the Lord. We must bring promptness into our religion. When some fervent impulse is glowing in our spirits, we must not play with the treasured

moment; we must strike while the iron is hot, we must bring boldness into our religion. Timid men make no fine ventures. In the realm of religion it is he who ventures most who acquires most. We see this illustrated everywhere. John Howard flings himself into the dark prisons of Europe in a cruel and bloodthirsty age, and works miracles of helpfulness. Maud Ballington Booth throws herself with absolute faith into the dark and wicked mass of men and women in our modern penitentiaries, trusting absolutely in the power of Jesus Christ to reach the most wicked and debased human soul, and wins hundreds and thousands of convicts to the holy life. May we learn the great lesson: Let us give ourselves with all the diligence that is possible to us to being and doing the will of God that is within our reach. Throw yourself unreservedly into the heavenly current that sweeps you ever and ever toward goodness and heaven. Thousands of miles away from home, fifteen men once dropt over the side of a sinking ship into the life-boat. There was no time to gather up anything in the way of sails or other equipment for the little craft. Only a bit of food

and water, and then out into the great deep. But those men never lost heart. They had taken their bearings well, and knew that they were launching their bark on the friendly bosom of the mighty equatorial current, and it would some day bring them home. And it did not disappoint them.

My brother, my sister, give yourself unreservedly to the current of Christian faith and service that sweeps away from worldliness and sin to God and Christ and heaven, and it will bring you home. You shall not creep into the harbor shipwrecked, but with flags flying, and bands playing, and the choruses of heaven ringing, you shall have an abundant entrance into the eternal kingdom of our Lord Jesus Christ.

THE GROWING SOUL

"Grow in the grace and knowledge of our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ; to him be the glory both now and forever."—2 Pet. 3:18.

"Thank God, a man can grow!
He is not bound
With earthward gaze to creep along the ground:
Though his beginnings be but poor and low,
Thank God! a man can grow.
The fire upon his altars may burn dim,
The torch he lighted may in darkness fail—
And nothing to rekindle it avail—
But, high above his dull horizon's rim,
Arcturus and the Pleiads beckon him!"

THE teaching of this epistle of Peter is that we must go either forward or backward; there is no such thing as standing still for Christian men and women, and Peter's final appeal is that we grow in the favor of God and Jesus Christ, becoming ever nobler and greater personalities. This privilege of growth is the greatest privilege of mankind. Paul in his letter to the Ephesians, fourth chapter and thirteenth verse, declares that it is our duty to

grow till we become perfect or full grown in our manhood, and the writer of the epistle to the Hebrews, in the opening of the sixth chapter, urges that we go on until we have reached our "full growth." Growth, movement, expansion, advancement, and progress are ours. It is a part of our inheritance. Oliver Wendell Holmes says: "And grow we must, even tho we outgrow all we love." And Horace Bushnell once said: "If the stars did not move, they would rot in the sky." No man is hopeless so long as he has the zest of life, the appetite for better things which bears witness of the possibilities of growth. A good man who had a reputation of thanking God for everything slipt one day on his way home from market, and dropt some meat that he was carrying home for dinner. As he dropt it, some dogs pounced on it, and carried it off. A bystander sneeringly asked, "What is there to thank God for now?" The man of grateful habit answered, "Well, my dinner has gone, but thank God, I have my appetite yet." And that was a great thing to be thankful for. Appetite is one of the greatest blessings we can know. Mentally, it is curiosity of mind that drives

after knowledge; physically, it is hunger for food; and spiritually, it is a zest to know God and his ways which evidences the possibility of a growing soul. Let us study some of the necessary conditions of spiritual growth.

I. To grow in the favor of Christ we must be genuine—keep clean of all cant and pretension. A post may look very much like a tree newly planted, but the difference is that the tree has roots that put it in relation to the surrounding soil and it begins to grow, while the post begins to rot. Your man of cant and pretense and hypocrisy is a post; he can not grow. If we are to grow spiritually we must be genuine, real, and sincere, honest with God and with our own souls. Dr. James L. Gordon says that religious cant is the first step toward the unreal which leads up to hypocrisy as a climax. Cant, according to the dictionary, is "A sing-song mode of speaking," "an affected religious phraseology," "whining pretensions to goodness." In plain words, cant is the careless use of words connected with religious and spiritual things. Frederick Douglass used to tell what a hard time he had to get churches in which to speak after he had escaped from

slavery and was going about agitating in behalf of the liberty of his race. He said that sometimes the church official appealed to would answer: "I don't know about this—I must ask the Lord. Let us pray." Douglass adds suggestively, "When they prayed with me, they never gave me the church." Sir John Hawkins, with a cargo of slaves stolen from Africa, the landing of which on the Atlantic coast marks the beginning of the slave trade on this continent, exclaimed, after passing through a tempestuous storm at sea, "But God would not suffer his elect to perish."

What cant! But we do not have to go back so far to find it. At a Sunday morning service in a New York City church some weeks after a number of new families had united with the church, the pastor one Sunday morning requested the church members to call on these new families. In doing so he used the following suggestive language: "I ask this as a recognition of your relationship to the church; it does not in the least involve social recognition." How delicious! What a chance for the growing kingdom of God in that community!

Nothing wins confidence so quick as a touch

of sincerity. John Stuart Mill once had it on his mind to say some very straight things to the workingmen of Great Britain, and he made the statement: "One-half of the workingmen of England are unreliable." Naturally the masses of working people were in arms against him. And when next he appeared in public, at a political meeting, it was a pandemonium of questions flung at him from every side: "Did you say it? Did you say it?" John Stuart Mill stept forward to the footlights and uttered one sentence, as brief as it was positive: "I did." From that moment the workingmen of England believed in John Stuart Mill. He began to grow on them for they saw he was sincere.

When the silver craze was at its height, and Theodore Roosevelt was a candidate for vice-president, he came onto the platform in Denver, Colorado, where nine-tenths of the audience were opposed to him, and were wondering if he would dodge the issue. Roosevelt stept to the front of the platform, showed his historic teeth, and snapt out a single sentence like a bullet from a rifle, "I am for the gold standard." And the sincerity and bravery of

it were so splendid that they cheered him to the echo.

There is a story of a slave who, on the auctioneer's block, was approached by a kind-hearted man who said to him: "If I buy you and take you to a beautiful home, will you be honest and truthful?" The black boy answered: "I will be honest and truthful whether you buy me or not."

The possibility of your growth in soul, in real personality, does not depend upon your age, or your wealth, or your culture, or upon your past experiences, but above everything else it depends upon your genuineness. It depends upon the sincerity with which you now renounce your sins and open your heart to the incoming of the truth of God, and the wholeheartedness with which you surrender yourself to the fellowship and service of Jesus Christ. If you are to grow into the great personality that God sees is possible for you, you must run the roots of sincerity down into the soil of Christian fellowship. The universal source of goodness is the open secret of the world. To tap it one needs only to be honest and sincere. I have read somewhere that the sub-soil of Lon-

don is such that it matters not where you sink a shaft, you will come upon a fresh, strong supply of pure, clean water. Sink your shaft amid the palaces of Belgravia and the pent-up stream will leap to your call; sink it in the Whitechapel slum district, and the result will be just the same. And so you may take the strongest, noblest, most cultivated man you know, the man that is most Christlike of all your acquaintances, and if you search out the secret of his life you will find that he draws the streams of his goodness and power from the love of God in Jesus Christ. You may go out into any penitentiary or into any group of wicked men and women among the underworld of some great modern Babylon, there you may pick out the wickedest man you know, let him get a glimpse of the possibility of the forgiveness of his sins and the divine help in Jesus Christ, let him begin to live straight and true in that new faith, and you will find that he is drawing all the streams of influence for this new goodness from the same source as the man who seems to you to be a saint of God. So the open secret of the growing soul is in the roots of sincerity and honesty that run down into and

tap the fountains of divine love in Jesus Christ.

II. To grow in the favor of God as Christians we must enter into the service of humanity. The law of Christ is the law of service. He came not to be ministered unto, but to minister. Some one sings:

> "I helped my weaker brother. Now the heights;
> Oh guide me, Angel, guide!
> The Presence at my side
> With radiant face, said, 'Look, where are we now?'
> And lo! we stood upon the mountain's brow—
> The heights, the shining heights!"

There is a very interesting book by Frederick Charrington, entitled, *The Great Acceptance,* written many years ago when the author was a young man just out of college. He had been traveling on the Continent before settling down to a life among the richest circles of London. His father was a wealthy brewer, and the young man himself was the heir to millions of pounds. His people were members of the Church of England, but without conscience upon the subject of the brewing interest from which they drew their wealth. During his travels young Charrington fell in with a very earnest Christian young man, was happily con-

verted, and became consciously a child of God and a friend and brother of Jesus Christ. He went back to London and soon after, passing one night a miserable little public house, he saw a poor woman, with two or three children dragging at her skirts, go up to the swing-doors. He stopt and heard her call to her husband inside, "Oh, Tom, do give me some money, the children are crying for bread." The man came out, looked at her for a moment, and then knocked her down into the gutter. Just then the young man looked up, and saw his own name, Charrington, in huge gilt letters, on the top of the little public house. It suddenly flashed into his mind that that was only one case of dreadful misery and fiendish brutality in one of the several hundred public houses that his family possest. He realized in a flash the appalling, the crushing, the incalculable amount of wretchedness and degradation caused by that business. Writing about it he says:

"Then and there, without any hesitation, I said to myself—in reference to the sodden brute who had knocked his wife into the gutter—'Well, you have knocked your wife down, and with the same blow you have knocked me out of

the brewery business.' I knew that I could never bear the awful responsibility of so much guilt upon my soul. I could not possibly allow myself to be a contributory cause; and I determined that whatever the result, I would never enter the brewery again."

He went straight to his father, and announced his intention of surrendering all share in the brewery And he gave up that great fortune for conscience's sake, and made it possible for himself to grow in the grace of Christ. For forty years God has wonderfully blest him in that metropolis of the world in serving humanity and in going about doing good as a representative of Jesus Christ. He has never sought for praise nor for fame, and is far less known to the world-wide public than many who are not worthy to be named with him. We do not, all of us, have a chance at a wide canvas on which to paint our pictures of sacrifice and courage, but the quality of life does not depend upon its quantity. The same law holds for every one of us—to grow in favor with Jesus Christ we must serve our community and our time.

III. The soul that is growing after the Christian type of growth must be always strug-

gling after the best, and must be always practising the best that it knows. Christian civilization points upward. Matthew Arnold has a poem entitled "Revolutions," in which he says:"

"Before man parted for this earthly strand,
While yet upon the verge of heaven he stood,
God put a heap of letters in his hand
And bade him make with them what word he could.

"And man has turned them many times; made Greece,
Rome, England, France—yes, nor in vain essayed
Way after way, changes that never cease!
The letters have combined, something was made.

"But ah! an inextinguishable sense
Haunts him that he has not made what he should—
That he has still, though old, to recommence,
Since he has not yet found the word God would.

"And empire after empire at their height
Of sway, have felt this boding sense come on,
Have felt their huge frames not constructed right,
And drooped and slowly died upon the throne.

"One day, thou sayest, there will at last appear
The word, the order, which God means should be.
Ah! we shall know *that* well, when it comes near;
The band will quit man's heart—he will breathe free."

And what is true of the growth of the race is true of the individual. The way upward

toward full growth in manhood and womanhood must come through the practise of the best within our reach.

A while ago on a university platform the president of the university arose to introduce a man whose investigations and achievements had attracted the attention of scientific men in all nations and added greatly to the fame and material wealth of the great State of California. Mr. Luther Burbank, who was now to address the audience, was a modest man, and it was with some difficulty that he had been persuaded to deliver the address. But his reluctance had yielded to their importunity, and the president said that Mr. Burbank would now tell them how he produced that wonder of the botanical world, the spineless cactus. Mr. Burbank arose amid applause, and in a gentle hesitating voice, said, "Well, I found a cactus one day with fewer spines than common, and it occurred to me that it might be possible to propagate a variety of cactus with no spines; and so I took it, and cultivated it with reference to producing a spineless cactus, until that was the result."

That was about all Mr. Burbank could tell

about it. He related his experience, and came to the end of the story.

"But, Mr. Burbank," said the president, "possibly you could tell us a little more in detail."

"I do not know that any further details occur to me that would be of interest."

"Well, Mr. Burbank, will you tell us how you produced the Shasta daisy?"

"I found a daisy with a blossom somewhat larger than those of other daisies, and it occured to me that I might possibly be able to produce one still larger. So I took pollen from another large daisy and cross-fertilized, and continued to do so for several seasons, always selecting the largest blossoms, and cross-fertilizing with other large blossoms. That is all."

It is all very simple, is it not? The spineless cactus was his ideal, and so he worked with the best he had until he got it. The largest daisy possible was his ideal, and so he worked with the largest he could find until he reached the full growth of its possibilities. So we have set before us the glorified manhood of Jesus Christ and the inspiration is given us to become like him; then we have the assurance that if we let

this hope possess our hearts and struggle to attain it, we shall slough off one by one our spines until they are all gone; little by little the beauty of our life's blossoms shall increase until the fragrance and glory of him who is the Rose of Sharon shall be our own.

And yet the holiest man that ever lived will at the climax of his growth in the likeness of Jesus Christ feel himself to be unworthy, will know that by his works he shall not be justified, that only in the mercy of God in Christ Jesus will there be hope of glorious fellowship with Christ at last. A great and good man who was noted for his Christlike spirit dreamed that he had died and stood at the gate of heaven, knocking for admittance. He gave his name, only to be told that his name did not appear upon the books. At last, after earnest entreaty, he was bidden to enter, and was told he would have the privilege of appearing before the Judge of all the earth, and if he could stand the test he might abide in heaven forever.

Standing before the Judge, he gave his name, and the following questions were put to him:

"Have you always led a righteous life?"

And he said "No."

"Have you always been kind and gentle?"

Again he replied in the negative.

"Have you always been forgiving to those that have been around you?"

"Alas! no; I have miserably failed here."

"Have you always been honest and just?"

And he answered, "I fear not."

As question after question was put to him by the Judge, his case seemed more and more hopeless. The last question was asked him, and to that, too, he was obliged to give the same negative reply. Just when he seemed to be in despair, the brightness about the throne became brighter, and suddenly he heard a beautiful voice, the most beautiful to which his ears had ever listened, sweeter than that of a mother; it was more beautiful than all the music of heaven; it filled all the arches of the skies, and thrilled the soul of this man as he stood before the Judge, trembling and about to fall. The speaker said, "My Father, I know this man. It is true that he is weak in many ways, but he stood for me in the world, and confest me before men, and I take his place before thee."

Just as the last words of this sentence were spoken, the dream was over and the man awoke. But he had his lesson, and it is a lesson for us all. Let us pray God that we may have the humility and the devotion and the courage that will enable us to grow to the last possibility of usefulness and beauty of character, but let us never forget that even then we have in ourselves no standing before God. Our standing must be in Jesus Christ. To him be glory now and forever. Let us ask ourselves the question whether we are so living in friendship with him that in the great day when we shall stand before the throne and see him as he is, we shall be like him, and shall be owned of him.

"Shall we know him if we see him
When he comes?
Shall we fear him, shall we flee him
When he comes?
Shall we love him and believe him,
Will his own at last receive him,
Or will slighting coldness grieve him
When he comes?

"Shall we dare to stand before him
When he comes?
Shall we worship and adore him
When he comes?

Or will pride presume to try him,
Will our craven fear deny him,
And our sins cry 'Crucify him,'
When he comes?

"May our feet be swift to meet him
When he comes!
May our hearts leap up to greet him
When he comes!
May our lips be fit to sing him,
May our hands be clean to bring him
All we have and all to crown him
When he comes!"

ABRAHAM LINCOLN

IN the year 1809 there was born into the world a group of men whose usefulness and worthy fame could not probably be matched by any other year in the century. It was a year which gave to poetry the erratic but extraordinarily brilliant author of "The Raven," Edgar Allan Poe; the witty and genial "Autocrat of the Breakfast Table," Oliver Wendell Holmes, and that peerless English singer, Alfred Tennyson. It gave to music men like Chopin, and Mendelssohn with his oratorios of St. Paul and Elijah. The same year gave to science the monumental figure of Charles Darwin, and to English politics and world-wide civilization the not less splendid figure of William Ewart Gladstone. It was also the birth year of Samuel Francis Smith who wrote our national hymn "My Country, 'tis of thee." But that which makes the year 1809 forever memorable in America is the fact that on the

twelfth day of February of that year there was born into the world that unique and marvelous man who has no parallel personality in the history of mankind, Abraham Lincoln.

Before entering upon a brief study of some of the characteristics of the life of one who certainly, after Washington, is the first American, I wish to lay the emphasis on that fact that Lincoln is unique, a providential man, a man who seems to have been raised up out of unusual conditions to the unusual place which he occupies in history. James Russell Lowell in his great Commemoration Ode brings this out with graphic clearness. He sings:

"Nature, they say, doth dote,
And can not make a man
Save on some worn-out plan,
Repeating us by rote:
For him her Old-World moulds aside she threw,
And, choosing sweet clay from the breast
Of the unexhausted West,
With stuff untainted shaped a hero new,
Wise, steadfast in the strength of God, and true.
How beautiful to see
Once more a shepherd of mankind indeed,
Who loved his charge, but never loved to lead;
One whose meek flock the people joyed to be,
Not lured by any cheat of birth,
But by his clear-grained human worth,

And brave old wisdom of sincerity!
They knew that outward grace is dust;
They could not choose but trust
In that sure-footed mind's unfaltering skill,
And supple-tempered will
That bent like perfect steel to spring again and thrust.
His was no lonely mountain-peak of mind,
Thrusting to thin air o'er our cloudy bars,
A sea-mark now, now lost in vapors blind;
Broad prairie rather, genial, level-lined,
Fruitful and friendly for all human kind,
Yet also high to heaven and loved of loftiest stars.

* * * *

Here was a type of the true elder race,
And one of Plutarch's men talked with us face to face.

* * * *

He knew to abide his time,
And can his fame abide,
Still patient in his simple faith sublime,
Till the wise years decide.
Great captains, with their guns and drums,
Disturb our judgment for the hour,
But at last silence comes;
These all are gone, and, standing like a tower,
Our children shall behold his fame,
The kindly, earnest, brave, foreseeing man,
Sagacious, patient, dreading praise, not blame,
New birth of our new soil, the first American."

I. Abraham Lincoln was great in his unselfishness. It is remarkable that a man could be so human as Lincoln and yet so absolutely unselfish. In this Lincoln stands out almost unique among the greatest men in history.

John Milton declares ambition "the last infirmity of noble minds," and Milton ought to know, for he was tremendously ambitious. Selfishness implies a very subtle and abiding love of self, and some of the greatest human characters have been marred by this weakness. Only one president before Abraham Lincoln seems to have been almost clear of it. Jefferson, Adams, Jackson, and many other great characters in our history never lost sight of their personal relation to the country, and always felt that they themselves were essential to the success of the cause in hand. Their personality they took quite as seriously as the character of the nation. But we have had two men, George Washington and Abraham Lincoln, whose attitude toward the country and its great problems were entirely different from this. They held themselves to be only ministers, only servants of the people and of their time. They were blown onward to their work by the breath of God. They were the willing servants of Providence, but felt themselves to be only servants. They never felt themselves necessary to the success of righteousness. Neither of them felt that they were personally

great men. They were humble in their estimate of themselves as compared with others in their own time. No man had truer humility than Abraham Lincoln. There was not much in him of that creative quality of mind which was so plainly marked in Wendell Phillips, Edward Everett, Charles Sumner, or Henry Ward Beecher. They felt that they must speak out the message throbbing in their hearts or die. Lincoln was of different quality. He listened attentively to the great ground-swell of thought and feeling that came up from the minds and hearts of the people, and when at last he spoke, his voice was the voice of the millions. He was acting not for himself but for them. Some people thought him slow, he was slow, as slow as Moses; but he was also as unselfish and as sure as Moses.

II. Lincoln was great in his integrity. This seems to have been a part of his inheritance. From his very birth he seems to have been a personality singularly sincere. His mind and heart were transparent, utterly without guile. Nobody seems ever to have known Lincoln at any period of his life who did not trust him. When he was in his first year of law practise,

and was seedy and poor, not owning half a thousand dollars' worth of property in all his worldly possessions, a client came to him one day in a case relating to a certain land claim, and Lincoln said to him, "Your first step must be to take thirty thousand dollars and go and make a legal tender. It of course will be refused, but it is a necessary step." "But," said the man, in amazement, "I haven't the thirty thousand dollars to make it with." "Oh, that's it; just step over to the bank with me, and I'll get it." So into the bank they went, and Lincoln said to the cashier, "We just want to take thirty thousand dollars with which to make a legal tender; I'll bring it back in an hour or two." The cashier handed across the money to "Honest Abe," and without a scratch of the pen in acknowledgment, he strode his way with the money, all in the most sacred simplicity, made the tender, and brought it back with as much nonchalance as if he had been borrowing a silver spoon of his grandmother. That was the kind of man Abraham Lincoln was all his life long. His integrity was like a mirror, always shining clear. It was the backbone that not only held him steady

but also held America steady through the terrible years of war. It was a bulwark to American credit. It was a tower in which the people trusted. Thousands of millions of dollars passed under his hand, but no itching palm caught the least soiled fragment of the tiniest currency. Faith in his rectitude, his integrity, was unbounded. The meanest, most venomous shaft never dared even fly at that mark. Lincoln's bitterest foes were ever willing to admit that he was invulnerable on the side of his integrity.

III. Lincoln was great as an orator and a statesman. Douglass declared that Lincoln was the greatest debater he ever met in or out of Congress. We might rest Lincoln's fame as an orator, without question, entirely on the Gettysburg Address. At the time of its delivery the immense audience had greatly admired Edward Everett's long and eloquent oration. But at Abraham Lincoln's words they sobbed and wept. When Mr. Lincoln had ended, he turned and congratulated Mr. Everett on his splendid address. Everett replied with a truthful and real compliment, "Ah, Mr. Lincoln, how gladly I would ex-

change all my hundred pages, to have been the author of your twenty lines!" And well he might, for those twenty lines will last as long as free government endures in the world. No other man of his time made a speech equal to it. Neither Gladstone nor Beaconsfield nor Bismarck, nor any other contemporary of Lincoln's at home or abroad, has left behind him anything in the same exalted class of oratory.

Lincoln was not only an orator, but he was a statesman. When Lincoln came to the presidency the eyes of princes, nobles, aristocrats, of dukes, earls, scholars, statesmen, warriors, all turned on the plain backwoodsman, with his simple common sense, his imperturbable simplicity, his determined self-reliance, his incorruptible honesty, as he sat amid the war of conflicting elements, with unpretending steadiness, striving to guide the national ship through a channel at whose perils the world's old statesmen stood aghast. The brilliant courts of Europe leveled their opera glasses at the strange figure. Fair ladies saw that he had horny hands and disdained white gloves; dapper diplomats were shocked at his homely manners; but old statesmen, who knew the

terrors of the channel through which he was passing, were wiser than the court ladies and the dandy politicians and watched him with anxious curiosity.

For a time Lincoln was the butt of the world's ridicule, but all that changed as the years went on. When Lincoln was dead at the hand of an assassin, one of the most beautiful tributes was the generous memorial of the London *Punch*. That paper had joined all the fashionable world in making merry at Lincoln's expense while he struggled through the dark years of war. But generous indeed was its apology. I quote only a few verses of the splendid poem in which it summed up its estimate of Lincoln's character:

"'*You* lay a wreath on murdered Lincoln's bier;
You, who with mocking pencil wont to trace,
Broad for the self-complacent British sneer,
His length of shambling limb, his furrowed face.

"'His gaunt, gnarled hands, his unkempt, bristling hair,
His garb uncouth, his bearing ill at ease,
His lack of all we prize as debonair,
Of power or will to shine, of art to please!

"'*You,* whose smart pen backed up the pencil's laugh,
Judging each step, as though the way were plain:
Reckless, so it could point its paragraph,
Of chief's perplexity, or people's pain!

"'Beside this corpse, that bears for winding-sheet
The stars and stripes he lived to rear anew,
Between the mourners at his head and feet,
Say, scurril-jester, is there room for you?'

"'Yes, he had lived to shame me from my sneer—
To lame my pencil, and confute my pen —
To make me own this hind of princes peer,
This rail-splitter a true-born king of men.' "

IV. Lincoln was great in his sense of humor and the genial playfulness of his nature. This has been a characteristic of the greatest minds throughout all time. Napoleon, Luther, Socrates, Cicero, Cæsar, Wesley, Franklin, Webster, and multitudes of other great minds were noted for this playfulness of nature that no stress of circumstance nor weight of age could overcome. A jest-book written by Cicero was current in Rome ages after his death. Cæsar and Napoleon made *bon-mots* as brilliant as their battles. Gilbert Haven, who knew Lincoln well and loved him much, said that he was as sportful as a lamb. He liked a good story better than a great honor. A merry twinkle ever sat in his eyes. Even when saddest with sorrow, a ray of this sunlight of humor played on their salt drops. Next to Benjamin Franklin, if next, he was the most

famous jester in America. Each of these men ever used a witty story to point an argument; and both of them made the country laugh in dark hours with a laughter that did good like a medicine.

This humor and playfulness of Lincoln was not unmanliness. It gave relief to an intensely overburdened nature—the dimples of childhood dancing on the cheek of age, the reminiscence of the past and the prophecy of the future, that kept his heart fresh amid the furnace of fire, heated seven times hotter than ever before, where he was called of God to walk. It was an important element in his career. Without it, neither he nor the people could have walked erect. Bishop Haven said:

"Those mirthful, melancholic stories creeping out on the top of great disasters, like light playing upon graves, relieved the people in their terrific gloom. Not that he did not weep. No President ever wept so much. Not that he did not soberly gird himself to his fearful responsibilities. None ever wrought so patiently and persistently. But by a pleasantry he lightened his and our bursting hearts, that would otherwise have sunk like lead in the mighty waters."

V. And now we come to the greatest of all the characteristics of Abraham Lincoln—his love. As Gilbert Haven well says, it is pos-

sible for a man to be great in ability, in learning, in service, and yet not be greatly loved. Franklin was as mirthful as Lincoln, Washington was probably as unselfish, and certainly as incorruptible. Adams was far more learned, and probably as just, yet for none of them did the people, the great common people, pour out such floods of tears from hearts breaking because they loved him. And if without irreverence we may use Paul's words about Christ in his relation to humanity, we may say as truthfully about Lincoln, and the love of the American people for him, "We loved him because he first loved us." He is the one president of the United States, in all that line of great men, who seems to have carried in his warmest heart the heart of all the people.

Some one says it is not his mother's knowledge of what is best for him, nor her lightsome nature, not her unceasing faithfulness, that makes the sick child commit himself so confidently to her arms. It is her love that makes him trustful. Her judgment may err, strength may yield, joy may flee; but love never faileth. It was this that made the people rest in Lincoln's loving arms in the darkest days of

the Republic. I doubt if we can find in history such love on the part of a ruler for his people. Cromwell loved his peculiar type of religion first; Wellington, duty; England was the second in their hearts; her people, last. Napoleon loved himself, not France; Cæsar, power, not Rome; Washington loved the country more than its people. All the great leaders of the Revolution, all the great leaders that have appeared since, in reformatory, civil, or military life, have been devoted first to the idea that controlled them; one to liberty, another to union; one to America's glory, another to her destiny; one to philanthropy, another to piety; one to justice, another to honor; one to empire, another to prosperity. Find me one, if you can, outside of Abraham Lincoln, who can be said in a peculiar, profound, and personal sense to have loved the American people. All of these truly great men have loved the nation. But Abraham Lincoln held every citizen in his heart of hearts; he felt a deep and individual regard for each and all; he wept over the nation's dead boys at Gettysburg as heartily as over his own dead boy at Washington. Their death, more than his own

child's, was the means of bringing him into a personal acquaintance and fellowship with Jesus Christ. That sorrow wrought in him a godly sorrow which has become a joy forever.

Without irreverence one may truly say that Abraham Lincoln in his love was a godly man. He cared for individual sorrows as God does. His doorkeeper had standing orders never to delay from one day to another any message asking for the saving of life. He heard a child cry in his ante-room one day, and calling his usher, had the woman that carried the child shown in. She had been waiting three days, by some mischance. Her husband was to be shot. She stated her case; the pardon was at once granted; she came out of the office praying and weeping; and the old usher, touching her shawl, told her who had really saved her husband's life. "Madam," said he, "the baby did it."

One of his generals once urgently remonstrated with him for his pardons, declaring that it seriously weakened the army. But with eyes full of tears Lincoln answered: "Mr. General, there are already too many weeping widows in the United States. For God's sake don't ask me to add to the number, for I won't do it."

Many people thought that this extreme kindness and love weakened the cause, but looking back on it after a generation, we may doubt that very much. Through it the people knew that there was a heart in the White House with a tenderness like to that of the heavenly Father. What power there was in that who shall tell!

And so this great apostle of love among American leaders and statesmen carried the nation's burdens safely through the storms of war into the harbor of peace. Without revenge, without malice, without hardness or bitterness of heart, he held loyal and disloyal, slave and master, black and white, Union soldier and Rebel leader in his great love. Had his dying lips been allowed to utter one sentence, I do not doubt it would have been to quote the dying words of Jesus: and for his assassin he would have prayed, "Father, forgive him, for he knows not what he does."

THE BLESSINGS THAT COME FROM PRAYER

"It is good for me to draw nigh unto God."—Ps. 73:28.

A VERY large part of the Bible is taken up with the story of men who prayed to God and the remarkable results that came about through the answers to their prayers. The great men of the Bible are all men of prayer. Abel, the first saint in the line of noble manhood recorded in the sacred story, was more famous for his prayers and the pleasure they gave to God than for anything else. Enoch was a man of prayer; his communion with God was so perfect, keeping him in such step with God's thoughts and purposes, that the inspired historian could think of nothing better to say of him than that he walked with God. And when the end came, it was so naturally the end of his God-accompanied life that the historian adds, "He was not; for God took him."

Abraham was so pre-eminently a man of

prayer that he was known all over the Orient of his day as "the friend of God." Wherever Abraham went, tho he pitched his tents in the wilderness or in the desert, far from the dedicated temples of religion, he never failed to erect there an altar to God and hold communion with heaven. God talked with him as a man talks with his friend, and on occasions sent a committee of angels to consult with him on affairs of great moment.

Job was a man of prayer. Nine-tenths of the wonderful Book of Job is the record of a series of prayers and God's answers to them. Paul was a man of prayer. We have many illustrations of the character of Paul's prayers in his letters to his friends. Often, as he is writing to them, he bursts out in prayer to God in their behalf. And he who is at once our divine Redeemer and our Example, was above all else a man of prayer. Often Jesus went into the mountain-wilderness at night, that he might be alone to talk with God and draw into his soul the solace and the strength needed for the work of the morrow.

I am sure that it can not fail to be a blessing to each of us to study together some of the

great blessings that can come through prayer.

I. Prayer to God will exalt the spirit of our lives and give elevation to our thoughts. It is not possible for us really to concentrate our thoughts on the Ruler of the universe, at whose beck the planets come and go, whose breath can smite worlds with catastrophe or banish plagues from far-off globes, without lifting the mind to a wider horizon than the petty material things that have deprest or enslaved us. Prayer lifts us out of ignoble selfishness and narrow and unworthy living into a wider outlook and a clearer vision, and inspires us to nobler purpose.

Prayer is indispensable in keeping alive in the soul a vivid realization of the high spiritual realities. The soul of man is like a fire in a furnace: If it is to be kept vigorously alive, it must have the breath of God to fan it constantly into flame. In the great days of the steamboats on the Columbia River they used wood for fuel, and I have seen the engineer open wide the doors of the huge furnace in order that the wind might have a fair chance at it, and the draft would be so strong that it was dangerous for a man off his guard to pass

near it lest he be drawn into those devouring flames. The firemen at such a time would not hesitate to toss half a cord or more of green wood into the furnace at one time, for with that fierce draft the fire turned into steam power everything it could reach. But if the fireman had shut off the draft, in a little while the fire would have died down and the power would have dwindled to useless ashes. It is like that with our souls. What the wind was to that furnace fire, prayer is to our souls. If we live without prayer to God, the light and warmth and glow of wisdom and generosity and love will die out of our hearts for lack of the winds of God that come to us when we throw open the door of our souls to heaven in sincere prayer and communion with God.

II. Prayer adds indescribable romance and adventurous interest to our every-day living. It is a widely circulated idea in some circles that a life of sin and carelessness of God's laws is more interesting and romantic than a life of Christian obedience to God. Nothing could be farther from the truth. Dr. W. R. Richards, of New York City, once preached a very interesting discourse on "The Monotony

of Sin," in which he imagines some ancient Babylonian visiting modern New York and being taken about to see the sights. His host shows him the great buildings and bridges and engineering achievements, and the man from the ancient world is filled with wonder and surprize. And then in the evening the New Yorker, who has reserved the exhibition of sin in its most seductive and fascinating guise to crown the day, is nonplussed when the Babylonian yawns and exclaims, "Oh, there is nothing new here. We had all this in Babylon three thousand years ago." There is nothing new in sin. Its new forms are simply revamped old forms. It is only in the higher realm, where you introduce into your life the touch of Almighty God, that you infuse into life the possibility of new adventures and romance. Prayer makes higher ideals and richer intellectual and spiritual enjoyment not only possible but certain.

Canon Farrar has beautifully said that prayer is to the soul what the dew is to the flowers of field or pasture. The burning wind of the summer's day may pass over them and the stems and blossoms droop and fade; but

when the dew falls on them at night, they will revive. So prayer brings back to our purposes and aims the strength to achieve. For what we desire we ask, and what we ask we aim at, and what we aim at we shall attain. No man has ever honestly prayed to God to be made more noble, and sweet, and pure, and heavenly minded, no man has ever prayed that the evil spirits of hatred, and pride, and passion, and worldliness might be cast out of his soul, without his prayer being granted. George Macdonald says:

"We doubt the word that tells us: 'Ask,
And ye shall have your prayer':
We turn our thoughts as to a task
With wills constrained and rare.

"And yet we have; these scanty prayers
Bring gold without alloy;
O God! but he who trusts and dares
Must have a boundless joy."

III. Prayer enriches our imagination and purifies our language just as sin debases the imagination and profanity impoverishes speech. It is a pitiful mistake to imagine that men lose in possible vivacity and human interest by developing through prayer the spirit-

ual life. There never was a greater lie than that the devil makes some men believe—that sin is more interesting and entertaining than goodness. All the variety there is in sin is in the first act of sin: all the freshness goes, and there are no such yawning, disgusted, bored souls on earth as the men and women who nauseate each other in sinful fellowship.

And how profanity impoverishes the speech! Many a boy begins to swear thinking to make his conversation more interesting, but he soon finds himself a slave to two or three oaths. Instead of enriching his vocabulary, it has left him linguistically a poor, ragged hobo. Robert Speer says that he has a friend who owns a setter dog with more different ways of expressing emotion and ideas by his tail than some profane men have with all the resources of the English language at their disposal. But while the habit of profane speech is the surest way to the loss of freshness and richness of language, there is no way so to inspire noble pictures in the imagination, to enrich the vocabulary in words of meaning and power, and to clothe all thought and speech with an atmosphere as fresh as the morning, as is the habit

of prayer to God concerning our own lives and the lives of those who are dear to us.

IV. Prayer hallows all our human friendships and loves and lifts all our friendships and associations to a high and noble plane. Paul is always telling his friends in his letters how he thanks God for them every time he remembers them, and he speaks of the rich blessings he is constantly asking God to bestow upon them. If we constantly, day after day, talk to God about those who are dear to us, we can not fail to become better and truer friends. This practise also tends to associate our friends with God and aids us to be a greater blessing to them. It is impossible that we should sincerely bring their needs into our conversation with our heavenly Father without increasing our sense of personal responsibility for them, and without our seeking, in every available way, to be God's messengers to answer our prayers concerning them.

Prayer for our friends can not fail to increase our love for them and our appreciation of them and our loyalty to them. Prayer is a great solace to our loneliness when separated from those whom we love. It seems to bring to

our hearts a comforting sense of their nearness.

The writer of the old hymn had real poetic insight when he sung:

> "Tho sundered far, by faith they meet
> Around one common mercy seat."

Prayer for our friends lifts the human bond out of the mere sensual pleasure of being together and into a spiritual and intellectual fellowship—a kindredship of soul which is hallowed by the love of God for us. There is no nobler spectacle for men or angels than two loving souls who, tho separated by wide distance of time and place, yet daily meet in sacred tryst in the heart of God in loving and grateful petitions for each other. In this way, surely, Tennyson's beautiful poem is realized; through these prayers of friend for friend,

> . . . "The whole round earth is every way
> Bound by gold chains about the feet of God."

Prayer is the one silver lining to the darkest cloud that can fill our day with gloom. Out of weakness and sin and failure there is only one sure way of escape, and that is through the open gate of prayer. Do you remember that

most suggestive and significant scene portrayed in the sixth chapter of Isaiah? It opens with the prophet fallen down on his face in the temple, his mouth in his hand, and his hand in the dust. Conscious that his life is full of evil, he cries aloud out of his realization of utter failure, "I am a man of unclean lips, and I dwell in the midst of a people of unclean lips"; in his complete humility and self-abasement he surrenders himself utterly to the mercy of God, Then it is he hears the divine voice saying: "Man, let me touch thy lips; this is the hour of a new life to thee. Stand upon thy feet." And out of the depth of failure and uncleanness he rises to his feet with new hope and courage. When he hears that divine voice again calling for volunteers to lead a great heroic forlorn hope for right—"Whom shall I send, and who will go for us?"—it is this young Isaiah, whose prayer has just lifted his soul out of the abyss of despair, who answers, with a voice ringing with good cheer and confidence, "Here am I, send me."

TO-DAY—THE MOST IMPORTANT DAY OF LIFE

"This is the day which the Lord hath made; we will rejoice and be glad in it."—Ps. 118:24.

TO-DAY is always the most important of all days; therefore the poet's appeal to concentrate all our energies on the present is amply justified:

"Make this a day. There is no gain
In brooding over days to come;
The message of to-day is plain,
The future's lips are ever dumb.
The work of yesterday is gone—
For good or ill, let come what may;
But now we face another dawn;
Make this a day.

"Though yesterday we failed to see
The urging hand and earnest face
That men call Opportunity;
We failed to know the time or place
For some great deed, what need to fret?
The dawn comes up a silvery gray;
The golden moment must be met:
Make this a day.

"This day is yours; your work is yours,
The odds are not who pays your hire;
The thing accomplished—that endures.
If it be what the days require.
He who takes up his daily round,
As one new armored for the fray,
To-morrow steps on solid ground:
Make this a day."

Longfellow, too, has a very sweet and luminous line:

"To-day grows the harvest of heaven."

Canon Farrar, commenting on that, suggests that it requires very aggressive and active cultivation on our part if that heavenly harvest is to be realized. With tremendous force he commands, "Have you an enemy? Then this very day forgive him. Have you wronged, or are you wronging another? Then this very day make him restitution. Are you a slanderer or a systematic depreciator of your brethren? Then cease to speak evil, and fling your unhallowed pen into the fire. Are you idle? Then go home and earn your bread by the sweat of your brow. Are you stained with impurity? Then come with that leprosy to him whose answer to the leper's cry—'Lord, if thou wilt,

thou canst make me clean,' came like an echo—'I will; be thou clean.'" There is no reformation possible at any time in the future that is not possible to-day. The time to repent of any evil is now. It may seem a hard thing to do to-day, but it will be harder to-morrow. "To-day is the day of salvation" to every sinning soul.

I. To-day is critical on our future. To-day is molding us, even in the face and form of our bodies. I have been reading a very beautiful study by the editor of the *Christian World* of London, England, under the fascinating title "The Feast of Faces." The writer is speaking of the human faces seen on a great city street. He declares that in each face we encounter a picture beyond the compass of the greatest human artist to portray, and a book deeper than may be found in the work of a Homer or a Shakespeare. The human face is at once the most instructive and the most mysterious and baffling thing on the earth. We have in it a sort of sublime Marconi instrument which vibrates to a spiritual touch from the heavens: science is utterly baffled at trying to explain how it is that the soul thrills through

and suffuses the human countenance with a glow of intelligence, and makes there a register that is ineffaceable—"If consciousness were simply a form of material energy, then in the same way that heat disappears by its conversion into motion, would nerve force disappear in the production of feeling." So science, up to this time, has met its Waterloo in the human face. In the faces of men and women and children two worlds meet with two sets of laws. It is this which gives the face its wonder and fascination. Fashioned by reason and lighted by soul, it shines, in its every feature, with the supernatural.

The writer to whom I have referred writes at length on the register of life's experiences in the face.

"The faces we ponder most," he remarks, "are those that carry history in them. As we look into some we realize at once that here the great choices, the great decisions, have been made; here has been the inner victory; the soul within has fronted life, the tug of its lower desires, the impact of its strange fortunes, and has emerged triumphant. That victory, we feel, has been won for us all. We share in it as we glance at the clear eye and at the lighted features."

How often have each of us looked into the faces of strangers and seen there the record of

such joyous human triumphs that it was hard for us not to speak to them and congratulate them on the splendid victory which has made life such a glad thing to them and through them to the world. Often we look in a face and know, down to the very core of brain and heart, that a beautiful soul is passing by. We feel larger and stronger and happier because of the toll of courage and joy we took from that radiant face even in the instant of its passing out of sight. Unconsciously such a face blesses the world. Something of heaven's glory shines through such a face just as the sun's light comes through the window of your dwelling.

But of course we see other faces. As we look on some faces and see heaven in them, so we look on others and shudder at the hell of evil and torment we behold registered there. Evil as well as good has the power to paint itself on that marvelous film of the human face. The thoughts I think, the purposes I plan, the imaginations I cherish, the love or the hate I allow to hold control in the deeps of my soul to-day, will leave their marks in my countenance and register the time of day in character on my face which God, in some mysterious

way, has made to be the dial-plate of my real self. Then how important is to-day with me. This day the inner self is registering hate or love on my features. This day benevolence or avarice has far-reaching pencils at work on that heaven-prepared canvas. This day is God's painting day for fadeless beauty if I will it so, or it may be the devil's branding day if my heart surrenders itself to his evil sway. God help each of us to understand and appreciate the critical importance of to-day!

> "Strong souls within the present live,
> The future veiled, the past forgot;
> Grasping what is, with hands of steel,
> They bind what shall be to their will."

II. To-day, then, is glorious because it is more than to-day; it reaches toward the future with power to dictate in a large way what shall be. That is in part what Browning meant, when in that wonderful poem, "Andrea Del Sarto," he makes the great artist who is painting, not to please the critics, but to express to the uttermost the beauty thirst of his own soul, say, "Ah, but a man's reach should exceed his grasp, or what's a heaven for?" So we should feel the magnetic drawings of to-morrow, the

tugging of history yet to be made, pulling at us in our opportunities for high and noble living in our to-day.

"To-day" has been making for countless thousands of years. God did not simply hand "to-day," with its infinite possibilities for blessing, ready-made out of the skies—Ah, no! "To-day" has been making since the beginning of time; since chaos; since God looked out over that darkness and said, "Let there be light, and there was light"; since God said, "Let us make man in our own image." That we might see this wonderful day of the twentieth century of the Christian era, men and women have been toiling and struggling and sweating the blood of body and brain and soul from Adam until now. Noah and Abraham and Moses laid foundations for to-day. Elijah and Elisha and Job helped on toward to-day. David sang of to-day. Isaiah and Daniel and the prophets for centuries longed for and caught glimpses of to-day. Jesus lived and preached and healed and was crucified and rose from the dead, ascended into heaven, and maketh intercession at the right hand of the throne of God that this "to-day" of ours might dawn. Paul and Peter

and John and the early Christians preached and wrote and suffered and gave their lives in martyrdom to make to-day possible. Types were invented, the Bible was printed, Luther thundered, Whitefield and the Wesleys covered the earth with their burning evangelism, to make our "to-day." The *Mayflower* dared the winter seas; Franklin and the Adamses and Jefferson and George Washington and the Revolutionary heroes fought the heroic battles of their time, that we might see "to-day." Abraham Lincoln and all the glorious heroes of the later epoch of the struggle for freedom were a part of the preparation for "to-day." Steamships and railroads and telegraphs and telephones and automobiles and airplanes have had their part in making "to-day." On a higher plane it may be said that all the great souls of all ages—Wilberforce and John Howard and Dorothea Dix and Frances Willard and a thousand nameless ones—toiled and battled and poured out their lives in holy sacrifice in order that our eyes might behold "to-day." But a hand's-breadth away, in our own generation, we have seen from every quarter of the globe, including our own dear land, twenty

millions of men go forth to war, leaving the peaceful arts of the life they loved; and other millions of heroic women go forth to hospital and camp to minister to their needs. We have seen millions of these noble souls lay down their lives not only with bravery, but with glorious joy on the altar of human liberty.

Ah, let no man hold "to-day" lightly. It is the most costly day in all human history. I call upon you by all the toil and sweat and tears and blood and holy sacrifice that have marked humanity's progress for thousands of years to make much of this "to-day" which God in his infinite mercy has bestowed upon us.

TO WHOM DO WE BELONG?

"Ye are not your own."—1 Cor. 6 : 19.

IN the revolt against kings and autocratic governments there is danger that the pendulum of our human clock will swing too far in the other direction. Many resent all control over their own individual whims and fancies. The Bolshevist, the I. W. W., the man who waves the red flag, has swung so far in the other direction that he becomes an Ishmaelite, his hand against every man, a threat against the very foundation and existence of the race and every organized form of mutual helpfulness and service.

At such an hour it is good to look long and deeply at the fundamental verities of our human life, some of the eternal truths which can not be shaken.

Paul declares that "no man liveth unto himself"; that we can not break off at a tangent and go our own way, regardless of others,

without sad wreckage. We are not our own. Other beings, human and divine, have investments in us, and we can not lose without their losing. We have been bought at a great price and our lives are not our own to spend carelessly or recklessly. Let us study, then, for a brief space, this very interesting and important question: "To whom do we belong?"

I. First we belong to humanity as a whole—to our race. The long evolution that has lifted our race out of painted savagery into our modern civilization, with all the gentle arts of living handed down to us, has put us under deep and binding obligations to multiplied millions of men and women who, in ruder times, struggled and toiled and fought against lethargy and evil, and thought and prayed and hoped and invented, and by their efforts lifted the race step by step to a higher level. You may go back along the pathway of human life on the earth and find many "mounts of human anguish" where heroic souls paid the price of purchase for you and for me and made each of us forever a debtor and a servant of our race.

II. We belong peculiarly to our own day and generation. We who have lived through

the last few years have been bought anew at a fearful price and dare not consider our lives in any narrow or selfish sense to belong to ourselves. Gov. Henry J. Allen, of Kansas, the next day after the armistice was signed which called a halt to the great war, printed in his daily paper a declaration worthy to be graven on all American hearts:

> "'In the beauty of the lilies
> Christ was born across the sea,
> With a glory in his bosom
> That transfigures you and me.
> As he died to make men holy
> Men have died to make us free
> Our God is marching on'."

"O'er the shattered Cathedral at Rheims, over the ruins of the Cloth Hall at Ypres, over the skeletons of trees and a million graves, over tortured Belgium and Serbia, St. Mihiel, the Ourcq, Argonne, Sedan, and other immortalized battlefields, the dawn of the new day breaks. The warm rays gild and soften the wrecked continents.

"Birds will sing again and the forgiving fairies of nature will heal the scars. The forces of evil have been crushed, and the voice of God now speaks through the voice of the people. The world is safe for free self-governing nations. Tyrants are gone forever. 'Break forth into joy, sing together ye waste places of Jerusalem, for the Lord hath comforted his people, He hath redeemed Jerusalem.' 'The people that walked in darkness have seen a great light.' 'For unto us a Child is born, unto us a son is given; and

the government shall be upon his shoulder.' Henceforth the government and leadership of the world must be from above. For centuries ambitious men have striven to govern or lead the world. All have failed. It is destined that they should not succeed. Even one of the greatest spokesmen of modern self-government has felt the restraining hand of the sovereign people in the climax when he sought too much power for himself. For we are all but clay and the Lord alone is the potter. The one Leader of the world must speak through all the people. *'Vox populi, vox Dei.'* There are no chosen ones among us. Only one man can lead the world out of its trouble, and that is the humblest of the humble, the lowly Nazarene, whose 'name shall be called Wonderful Counselor, Mighty God, Everlasting Father, the Prince of Peace.'

"Henceforth men must realize that formal government can advance only as rapidly as moral government. The good impulses that are to change the world and make it better must come from the hearts of men through love of service and love of God. They can not be imposed upon from without by formulas or changed by man-made laws.

"If this peace is to endure a thousand years, it must be built on something more than man-made forms or mechanical covenants. As long as men's hearts are imperfect there will be bickerings and conflicts. As men's hearts approach nearer to perfection, world-wide peace will become more and more assured. There is no possibility of making a perfect social order out of imperfect material. And for this reason the only salvation of the world from war is through the individual hearts which reach toward God.

"Out of the overwhelming joy of the world, out of the greatest triumphs for liberty of all the centuries, out of the clatter of the market-place, the weighty disputations of the forum and the man-made schemings and plannings for the things that are to come, there must come a solemn hush:

"'The tumult and the shouting dies;
The captains and the kings depart;
Still stands thine ancient sacrifice—
An humble and a contrite heart.
Lord God of Hosts, be with us yet
Lest we forget, lest we forget.'"

Few men in our time or any time have written a more splendid trumpet call to the deep heart of humanity. It was evidently penned in the same high and noble spirit of reverence toward God which Paul felt when he wrote our text. We must realize with Paul and Governor Allen that we are not our own; that we have been bought with a great price in order that we may cleanse ourselves from all selfishness and evil of every kind and rise to the highest possible service of God in his great love and purpose for the redemption of our race.

III. All this leads to the wonderful statement Paul makes, that at the last analysis we belong to God. God so loved the world that he gave his son, the ever-blessed Christ, to die to ransom and redeem us from our sins. It was God's love that made possible man's redemption from sin. The world is full of redeeming love. Mothers and fathers, wives and hus-

bands, children and friends, every relation of life and every stratum of human living have furnished illustrations of how a great love does not hesitate to suffer in order to bring wandering feet back into the path of righteous living.

But we need not go outside of the Bible itself to find a marvelous illustration of how the infinite love of God brought us back from our bondage to sin and cleansed us from our iniquities. If you will read the book of Hosea, you may get illumination on the way in which Christ bought our guilty souls and made us forever his own possession. The Prophet Hosea was married to a woman who had won his whole heart. She was not worthy of it, but he poured out to her all the wealth of affection of one of the noblest hearts that ever throbbed in a human breast. She was a foolish, unreliable, superficial woman. Not long after her marriage she became unfaithful to her husband. In the most abandoned way she entered upon shameful and wicked intrigues with other men. Hosea soon came to know of the shame and dishonor that had disgraced his home, but in the splendid magnanimity of his manhood he

continued to love her. After a time a child was born in his house that was the fruit of her sin and, in his broken-hearted misery, Hosea named the child "Lo-ammi," meaning "Not of my people." Finally the wicked woman left his home and became a public woman of the street. She went from bad to worse in her dissolute life until she reached the dregs and was sold, according to the custom of the day, as a slave. But Hosea, tho she had dishonored his home and shamed and disgraced him, had never ceased to love her, and when he knew she was to be put up at auction in the slave market, he forgot all the sins against his honor and his love, or because of his great affection overcame all such memories, and went to that slave sale and bought her from her owner and took her back with him to his home again, and with infinite tenderness and compassion, redeemed and saved her from her life of shame. She was no longer her own—Hosea bought her; the money he paid was the smallest part of the price. Who can tell the awful anguish of that noble man's soul, as with all eyes curiously or sneeringly or pityingly fastened on him, that noble-hearted man went into that slave mar-

ket to buy back his wife as a wanton of the city street. But it was a miracle of love. He could do it and he did do it because he loved her. He took her shame and sin on his own shoulders. He became branded with sin for her sake. And when he had paid the price and took her tenderly by the hand and made way for her through the curious, astonished crowd of lookers-on and walked down the street by her side, protecting her from insult, he was wounded for her transgressions, he was bruised (oh, how cruelly he was bruised) for her iniquities. Surely the chastisement of her peace was upon him, and by the stripes that patient, noble-hearted husband bore for her sake and the great love he bore her she at last was healed. He went to his garden of Gethsemane when he went down into that slave market as truly as Jesus went to his in the Mount of Olives. He sweat blood in his agony as Jesus did in the dark night amid the sleeping disciples, and every sneer in that auction crowd was a nail that pierced his quivering heart as surely as Jesus was nailed to his cross. But love paid the price and won the prize. By his love and suffering and fellowship he cleansed the wom-

an he loved and redeemed her. I like to think that after she had become a truly good and holy woman she must have been the most grateful and loving wife of her age.

But let us find in it a great illustration of the debt we owe to God and our Savior. God's love sought us and would not let us be lost. Christ's love made him willing to take the poverty and shame and disgrace and sin that belonged to us on his own shoulders. He bought us by becoming sin and shame for us. Thank God, he has the power and the goodness to cleanse us from all our iniquities if we will yield ourselves as Hosea's redeemed wife did to her husband.

How unworthy is any formal or indifferent recognition on our part of the atonement made for us by him who bought us with his own precious blood. Nothing short of all our hearts, all the passionate devotion of our natures, all the loving obedience of our lives, can make any adequate return for the price he paid for our salvation.

"Where the whole realm of nature mine
That were a present far too small.
Love so amazing, so divine,
Demands my love, my life, my all!"

MY GOSPEL

"According to my gospel."—Rom. 2:16.
"In every good work trust thine own soul."
—Ecclus 32:23.

THE scope of our theme depends on what we mean by that oft-repeated word, "gospel." When you trace it back to its root in Paul's mind and heart, I am sure that to him it meant "An interpretation of Christ." This also agrees with the consensus of opinion in all Christian lands. At the opening of the New Testament we have four very small books, known as the Gospel according to Matthew; the Gospel according to Mark; the Gospel according to Luke; and the Gospel according to John. Each of these little books tells the story of one man's remembrance of the life and sayings of Jesus during his public ministry and of his conduct and bearing under the pressure of notable experiences. Each of these men writes his own story as he saw it; that is, he gives his own independent interpretation of Christ, and

what he writes becomes, in a very distinctive sense, his own gospel. These men, writing of the most wonderful character in all human history, naturally do not write the same story. They are writing at different times and places, and their stories partake of their own temperaments and moods and the characteristics of their individual minds. Each of these four gospels is colored with the peculiarities and tone of the man who writes; and yet each writer has given us a gospel—an interpretation of Jesus. But in order to get the best interpretation, we need to take the composite picture which we get by putting together the writings of all these four who have told of their Master and ours. When we have got all the light that these four gospels can throw on the character and conduct of Jesus and his wonderful atonement for sinful men, his resurrection from the dead, and his ascension into heaven, we turn to these remarkable letters of Paul and are immediately made to feel that we have come on a new and rich and illuminating interpretation of Jesus; a very different interpretation, not in any sense antagonistic or inconsistent with the first four, but different, even

as Paul himself was different. All this is inevitable concerning any interpretation where human personality enters into testimony or description. Let any four men undertake to describe a river. One is a pilot: Like Mark Twain he will tell you about currents and channels. He will have much to say about how sand bars are formed; how the veering of currents will crumble a farm into fragments on one bank of the stream, carry it miles away and deposit it on the opposite shore, perhaps in a different State, as often happens along the Missouri River. He will tell of snags to avoid, and his conversation will be like the log of a river steamer.

Another man is a fisherman: to him a river is simply a fish farm to be tilled. He knows where the great schools of catfish or buffalo swarm; he knows where they feed and where they congregate under the ice in sluggish sloughs in winter, and how he may sometimes capture a carload at a single haul of his seine: To him the river is only a fish pond.

Another man is an electrical engineer. He is out on a search for power: to him a river is nothing but so much horsepower. He can tell

you of the fall in so many miles of the river bed. He can tell you the speed of the current. He can tell you where a dam can be built, and how many tons of water can be stored, and how much power can be developed to be carried on wires, hundreds of miles, to drive mills and light towns and throw interurban cars like shuttles between far-off cities. To him a river is only a source of power.

A fourth man, an artist, looks on the river only as a thing of beauty.

A fifth man thinks of it in the language of irrigation when the land is dry and thirsty, and to him a river is simply so much fertility to be drawn off in canals and spread out over a thousand farms that at its approach shall blossom as the rose.

The interpretation which Matthew, Mark, Luke, John, and Paul give to this marvelous personality and career of Jesus Christ is something like that. Each is genuinely loyal and faithful to Jesus; but because he is human, he tells more about himself than he does about Jesus; and so what he tells is never in any case all the gospel, nor is it entitled to be called the gospel or the complete gospel, but is truly

the gospel according to John, or Paul, as the case may be. So Paul is entirely within his rights when he says "my gospel."

In just as real a sense as Mark or Paul were interpreters of Christ, we also are interpreters of our Master if we, in our own time and place, are living the spiritual life with sincere hearts.

That word "spiritual," and the phrase, "the spiritual life," have been so abused and caricatured in our day that people are afraid of these great terms. Many have claimed to be spiritual on the strength of certain shibboleths or a certain capacity for excitable feelings, while all the time their conduct was unworthy and degraded. But we must not forget what Paul says, that "to be spiritually minded is life and peace."

Brierley, the great English essayist, gives us a very clear definition of what it is to be spiritual. He says that spirituality is two things—a perception and a performance. It is, for one thing, to realize God as everywhere in his world, to accept with reverent gladness every variety of its phenomena and every phase of its experience as a new manifestation of God. The spiritual man is he, who, in a

sunset on the Alps, or in a sonata of Beethoven, or a problem of mathematics, in the age-long drama of history, in the laughter of little children, in the events of his own life, in the questions and answers of his experience, in his highest aspirations, sees everywhere the manifestations of God which his soul's voice tells him is the divine love, to be united with which is the one final craving and cry of his heart.

Brierley declares that with this perception comes a performance on our part to match the light which has come to mind and heart. Knowing the universe as spiritual, its law as holy, the spiritual man seeks as his dearest boon to conform his action and character to that law. The law is broad. All knowledge, all science, all skill are included in it. A Mozart's perfection in music or the mathematics of a man who spans Niagara with a vast bridge may be equally akin to the spiritual. No particular profession or vocation has any monopoly of spirituality. The practical man who deals with such material things as earth and cement and steel may be more truly spiritual in the reverence of his attitude to the immanent God than the poet or the philosopher. Indeed,

the key to all true human greatness is this attitude of the soul of the worker toward the relation of God to himself and his work. No man is really great, no matter how much temporary noise he makes, apart from this greatness. Christ is supreme as the spiritual Man of all history because his whole being answered to the spiritual and thrilled in perfect harmony to the sense of God. Mr. Bryce, speaking of Gladstone and of the secret of his greatness—which made him the foremost citizen of the world in his own time—says: "He led a third life also, the secret life of the soul. Religion was of all things that which had the strongest hold upon his thoughts and feelings." The same words might have been used with equal pertinency and truth of Theodore Roosevelt, who followed Gladstone as the foremost citizen of the world.

Well indeed does Brierley say that this spirituality of nature is the hallmark of manhood. As we rise out of the slough of the animal and become more completely human, the more clearly does the world appear to us as spiritual; and the more do we feel

"Through all our fleshly dress
Bright shoots of everlastingness."

The advance of Christianity among men must always depend on the faithfulness with which each Christian man or woman gives his own interpretation of Jesus to the people. Oliver Wendell Holmes sings:

"A holy life is Heaven's unquestioned text;
That shining radiance doubt can never mar,—
The pillar's flame, the light of Bethlehem's star!"

It is the glory of our humanity that we are individual, and that it is possible for each one of us to give something peculiarly attractive through our gospel to draw men's admiration and love to Christ. Great living is very simple, it is only to

"Do what you can
Be what you are
Shine like the glowworm
If you can't be a star."

To those near to it the glowworm may be much more important that the star.

Browning has the same thought in mind when he extols

"The chivalry
That dares the right and disregards alike
The yea and nay o' the world."

There is something on which every one of us should feed our soul's individuality and courage in these splendid lines of the poet:

"By thine own soul's law learn to live,
And if men thwart thee take no heed;
And if men hate thee have no care;
Sing thou thy song, and do thy deed;
Hope thou thy hope and pray thy prayer,
And claim no crown they will not give,
Nor bays they grudge thee for thy hair.

"Keep thou thy soul-won, steadfast oath,
And to thy heart be true thy heart;
What thy soul teaches learn to know,
And play out thine appointed part,
And thou shalt reap as thou shalt sow,
Nor helped nor hardened in thy growth,
To thy full stature thou shalt grow."

If we are Democrats or Republicans simply because our fathers were, we add nothing to the world's store of political knowledge. Or if we are Methodists or Presbyterians or Baptists just because we were born in such a home, we add nothing to the religious knowledge of the world. Let us believe that when God created us, it was as truly an individual crea-

tion as when a Luther or a Wesley or a Paul was born. Let us not be imitators only; let us give our own minds and hearts a fair chance for usefulness.

> "Whatever you are—be that;
> Whatever you say—be true;
> Straightforwardly act—
> Be honest—in fact
> Be nobody else but you."

True, some people use their individuality only as a matter of stubbornness. I mean a nobler thing than that. Live, through prayer and kindly, earnest service for your fellows, in whatever place you are, in such a genuine friendship with Jesus Christ that he will reveal some vision of his infinite loveliness to your heart, and you shall catch from the glowing countenance of the Master some light from heaven which will give to your peculiar personality a radiant charm which to some souls about you will make you the most glorious gospel of the great God they will ever hear or read.

Perhaps Priscilla Leonard's lines will make it clearer to you than any words of mine:

"There is some place for you to fill,
Some work for you to do,
That no one can or ever will
Do quite as well as you.
It may be close along your way,
Some little homely duty,
That only waits your touch, your sway,
To blossom into beauty.

"Or it may be that daily tasks,
Cheerfully seen and done,
Will lead to greater work that asks
For you and you alone.
Be brave, whatever it may be,
The little or the great,
To meet and do it perfectly,
And you have conquered fate."

The glory of every man and woman being brave enough to shoulder their duty and to go forth to do it with all the original power given them in their creation is that they give God a chance for a new and glorious adventure. Life for us is something new and splendid and romantic when we cease to be imitators and surrender ourselves under the leadership of the Spirit divine to become adventurers in God's good world. In the book of Jeremiah is the command, "Dwell deep." What a motto for a life!

James Buckham sings:

"Dwell deep. The little things that chafe and fret,
Oh, waste not golden hours to give them heed!
The slight, the thoughtless wrong do thou forget,
Be self-forgot in serving other's need.
Thou faith in God through love for man shalt keep.
Dwell deep, my soul, dwell deep."

THE TENTH MAN

"Where are the nine?"—Luke 17:17.

TEN lepers on the border between Samaria and Galilee wandered in a group—poor outcasts. If any one passed, they must stand aloof, far out of the track of travel, and call the hateful warning that they were unclean. But news had sifted through the land to these ten unfortunate and unhappy men that a young rabbi from Nazareth had shown himself possest of wonderful power to heal diseases, and had even been known to heal leprosy. So these men, who had for a long time been hopeless outcasts from their fellows, found hope springing up in their hearts, that if in some way they could call their sad condition to the attention of this powerful and merciful young rabbi, they might find health and recovery at his hand. So, hearing that he was passing through this border country, they took their stand far off from the road they ex-

pected Jesus to use, but near enough to make him hear. As he drew nigh, with mingled emotions of doubt and hope and fear they called aloud, "Jesus, Master, have mercy on us!" And Christ paused in his journey and looked with kindness and compassion on the pitiful group of ten lepers and said, "Go and show yourselves unto the priests."

There must have been something very magnetic and convincing about the speech of Jesus. Once when he was speaking in the open air, the police of Jerusalem were sent to arrest him. They listened to him a while and came back without saying a word to him and told the people who had sent them, "Never man spake like this man." So when Jesus uttered this simple command to the lepers, they immediately, without question or quibbling of any kind, obeyed him and started to find the priests. And as they went, they were healed.

Nine of these men went on; all, no doubt, greatly relieved and comforted; but went their own way and did not return to tell Jesus the great good news of their healing or to thank him for his wonderful miracle of mercy and love. The tenth man came back, came back in

great emotion and gratitude, full of love and adoration for Jesus. Coming where he was, the man fell on his face at the feet of the Master and with loud voice shouted for all to hear his glad and happy testimony of the healing he had received, and so glorified God for his miracle of grace.

It evidently pleased Jesus very much to have this man return with such a warm-hearted expression of thanks; but the grieved disappointment of his tender heart concerning the others is easily seen in his sad query, "Where are the nine?"

I. We should learn from this striking story that it is not enough to feel gratitude in our hearts; we should definitely express it in words and by conduct. Mercy shown to us is such a beautiful thing, such a divine thing, that both in giving and receiving we should take care to do it in a gracious and beautiful way—the most beautiful way possible for us. In Paul's letter to the Romans in the twentieth chapter, where he gives so many wise, common-sense rules for the Christian's daily life, he says that there are many deeds, good in themselves, which lose much of their beauty and use-

fulness when they do not have a proper setting. For instance, if a man is going to rule, he must do it with diligence: a careless or lazy ruler always brings trouble to his people. Diligence is the proper setting for official power, and in connection with that Paul refers to showing mercy, and says that "he that showeth mercy" must do it "with cheerfulness." So in showing our appreciation of mercy, we should seek to do it in the most beautiful and delightful way within our power. Gratitude is such a beautiful feeling that it deserves a loving and adorable setting that shall bring the highest and noblest possible good cheer and pleasure to the one who has extended mercy and blessing to us.

But in our present study I am specially imprest that Jesus himself has suggested to us, by the question in our text, a most helpful and profitable line of consideration. Jesus asks, "Where are the nine?" Why are they not here also to show their appreciation and glorify God as this man is doing? There is our line of search. If we can through our knowledge of the motives of human nature find those nine men, we will not have hunted in vain for benefit from this theme.

Not knowing their names I will indicate these men by number.

Number One. I think this first man who went away and never came back to thank Jesus for healing was one of those who always take their blessings gloomily. Elizabeth Akers has a little song about the weeping willow that tells his story. She remonstrates:

"O willow, why forever weep,
As one who mourns an endless wrong?
What hidden woe can lie so deep?
What utter grief can last so long?

"The spring makes haste with step elate
Your life and beauty to renew;
She even bids the roses wait,
And gives her first sweet care to you.

"The welcome redbreast folds his wing,
To pour for you his freshest strain;
To you the earliest bluebirds sing,
Till all your light stems thrill again.

"The sunshine drapes your limbs with light,
The rain braids diamonds in your hair,
The breeze makes love to you at night,
But still you droop and still despair.

"Beneath your boughs, at fall of dew,
By lovers' lips is softly told
The tale that all the ages through
Has kept the world from growing old.

"But still, though April's buds unfold,
Or summer sets the earth aleaf,
Or autumn pranks your robes with gold,
You sway and sigh in graceful grief."

So Number One was a weeping willow of a man. He had come into the presence of the divine Son of God and the miracle of heaven's love had come upon him and he was given a new chance at life, but he went with long face and gloomy countenance and did not come back to thank Jesus or glorify God. How much he lost! He would have found the way to "Laughter Town" if he had followed Number Ten back to Jesus.

Number Two was a light-minded, self-centered youth. When he felt the rush of healing sweep through his veins and looked down and saw that his flesh had lost its dry scales and was as fresh as in his boyhood, he jumped and skipt in his great glee and in joyous ebullition of spirits; but in his light selfishness it is doubtful if it ever occurred to him that thanks were due not only to Christ but to his own self-respect on receiving this great blessing. His blessing, like some seed, had fallen on shallow soil, with the rock close underneath,

and it came up quickly but died soon for lack of depth. Let us deepen our soil by practising genuine appreciation both to God and man for every blessing we receive.

Number Three was of a skeptical turn of mind and was greatly astonished at his sudden healing and could not at first persuade himself that he was really healed. He said, "It looks all right, but it probably will not last. If it does last, and is really genuine, I'll hunt Jesus up and thank him; but of course it is too good to be true!" How many people shut themselves out from all the sweetest joys of life by that sad refrain, "It is too good to be true." Oh, my friends, that is the wrong spirit in a world created by a God who is love and ransomed by him who is "the light of the world." Instead of saying, "It is too good to be true," when some precious blessing has fallen on us, we should with grateful courageous soul cry, "It is good enough to be true in God's bright world!"

Number Four said, "I have lost so much time since I have been a leper, I must get back to work. I have no time to follow up the great Rabbi and thank him." How many fail

right there in their Christian life! They forget the glorious friendship with Jesus, and the inspiration and fellowship they might receive from his divine and gracious presence, by hurrying off to take their lives again into their own feeble hands. The way back to Jesus, in grateful thanksgiving, is the shortest way to triumph in every noble life-purpose.

Number Five prided himself on being a hard-headed, practical man, with no foolish sentiment. He thought that to go and follow up Jesus and publicly express his gratitude for the wonderful blessing bestowed upon him, would look sentimental and unmanly—and so he stayed away. Such people lose out of their natures the sweetest juices of human living. In family life this very thing is often a tragedy—plenty of food for the body, but hearts are starved for some expression of love, and souls wither and shrivel up for lack of the spiritual food which mutual appreciation and gratitude lovingly exprest would have supplied:

"We starve each other for love's caress;
We take, but we do not give;
So easy it seems some soul to bless,
But we dole our love grudgingly, less and less,
Till 'tis bitter and hard to live."

Number Six said, "This famous Rabbi is too great a man to care for my feeble thanks; He has too great a task on his hands to notice whether I am grateful or not." But he was mistaken. Jesus did notice. His gentle heart was grieved when the nine did not return. No one ever gets so great in this world or, we may well believe, in any world, that an expression of genuine appreciation of a blessing rendered will not give an added thrill of joy. If the great God finds gratitude the sweetest incense of the universe, it is within the power of the humblest to bless the highest by the note of sincere thanksgiving.

Number Seven was a proud-spirited man and said, "It is too small a thing in return for so great a blessing simply to go and say to Jesus, 'I thank you.' I will wait until I get rich, and then I will buy him a fine present and go and thank him." How many people lose the greatest blessings of life in that way. They told me this story down in Texas: In one of their prosperous cities was a saloon man of a type much superior in many ways to the man who usually conducted that business. He had a lovely wife. She had fallen in love with him

and married him before he went into the liquor business. She was a genuine Christian woman and a devout church member, and her husband's business shamed and humiliated her. But she loved him and loyally clung to him, tho she was heart-broken over his sin. When prohibition was seen to be surely coming, this man said to a Christian business man of that city, with whom he was friendly, "I am glad it is coming. I have laid by plenty of money for the rest of my life, and I have bought some lots in the finest surburb of the city. I am going to build my wife a beautiful home. I will show her in the years to come how much I appreciate the love and loyalty she has given me while it was grieving her heart almost to breaking." "But," said the business man to whom this statement was made, "it was too late—that faithful, heart-broken wife died a week before prohibition went into effect." A little consideration in turning to a clean life while she lived would have given her infinite happiness. Bring your thanks to your friend and to God now.

Number Eight said, "I'll wait until some day when there is a great crowd gathered about

Jesus, and then I will go and tell the multitude what he did, and bring large honor to him." But we do not read that he ever got his looked-for opportunity to make a great display of his gratitude. Now is the time to speak your word of appreciation. We ought to live in such a spirit that our gratitude rises from our hearts like incense in response to any kindness or blessing bestowed upon us. The manna God gave Israel spoiled when they tried to hoard it up. Stale thanksgiving is not attractive. As Paul says about being "instant in prayer," so our hearts should also be instant in praise and gratitude.

Number Nine felt very grateful, but he had little or no faith in his ability to express his gratitude. He said, "Of course I am grateful for this wonderful cure; Jesus must know that; but I am such an awkward creature and I am such a bungler in my speech that I would find it impossible adequately to express the gratitude I feel." And so he remained away. How foolish he was! Why, suppose he had come and been so overcome with his emotion that he could not have uttered a word,—his grateful face, and the tears that filled his eyes would have

touched the heart of Christ with great joy, and those who witnessed would have had their hearts melted in tenderness, and God would have received glory.

But Number Ten was the wise man—he came back. He did not stop to reason about it. He had been a poor leper and had heard Christ's command. On the way to obey that command, healing had come to him. He felt like a new man and his flesh was as soft as a child's. His leart leaped up in gladness. Suddenly love for the Christ who had healed him sprang up in his soul. He must get to Jesus. He must show him what had been done. Other people must know about it. Christ must have the credit for it. So without stopping to think what he would say or what he would do when he got there, he ran with all his might in the direction he had seen Jesus traveling. At last he caught sight of him, and his heart was glad. Other people were about Jesus, but that made no difference, his heart, not his head, was in command. At last he reached the Master, and he never could have told you how it happened, but all that last hundred yards, ever since he

caught sight of Jesus, he had been shouting aloud as he ran, "Glory be to God, I am healed! My leprosy is gone! I am a well man! Glory to God!" And then he was in the presence of Jesus. What could he say to him who had so blest him? There was nothing good enough to say, but in the deep gratitude of his soul he threw himself prostrate with his face to the ground and his hands on the Master's feet, crying, "Thank you, Jesus! Thank you! With all my heart and self, I thank you!" And Jesus said to him, "Arise, and go thy way: thy faith hath made thee whole." This tenth man never fully realized what a beautiful thing he had done. He had made one of the big bright spots in the life of him who was often called "the man of sorrows."

God teach us the beautiful art of expressing our appreciation. The world needs it so badly. Criticism is very common; let us brighten the world by making gracious appreciation of every kind word and deed even more common. Thereby shall we bless ourselves; we shall sweeten our own hearts; we shall broaden and make more Godlike our own souls by studying

to be sensitive in response to every blessing bestowed; and we shall bring hope and courage and strength and joy to hearts that need, beyond anything else on earth, the divine tonic of appreciation.

THE ROMANCE AND JOY OF THE PIONEER

"He went out, not knowing whither he went."—Heb. 11:8.

AMERICA is preeminently the land of the pioneer. Both Plymouth and Jamestown were camps of the pioneers—those splendid adventurers whose courage faced the terrors of the Atlantic in sailing vessels, small and slow, to find a home and a theater of achievement in a new and unknown world. Like Abraham they went forth, not knowing whither they went. The Pilgrims and the Hollanders of New York soon swarmed over the Alleghenies. The Virginians in the new generation went on and ventured into Tennessee, and Daniel Boone led them on to Kentucky. Then great streams of adventurous souls joined in that wonderful pioneer movement toward the Pacific. Badger Clark has caught the rhythm of it well in his interpretation of the spirit of those brave and rugged adventurers who passed on their spirit from one generation to another

until they had joined hands in one long sweep of conquest from Plymouth and Jamestown and the Hudson to Puget Sound, the Columbia River, and the Golden Gate:

"A broken wagon wheel that rots away beside the river,
A sunken grave that dimples on the bluff above the trail;
The larks call, the wind sweeps, the prairie grasses quiver
And sing a wistful roving song of hoof and wheel and sail.
Pioneers, pioneers, you trailed it on to glory,
Across the circling deserts to the mountains blue and dim.
New England was a night camp; Old England was a story.
The new home, the true home lay out beyond the rim.

"You fretted at the old hearth, the kettle and the cricket,
The fathers' little acres, the wood lot and the pond.
Ay, better storm and famine and the arrow from the thicket,
Along the trail to wider lands that glimmered out beyond.
Pioneers, pioneers, the quicksands where you wallowed,
The rocky hills and thirsty plains—they hardly won your heed.
You snatched the thorny chance, broke the trail that others followed
For sheer joy, for dear joy, of marching in the lead.

"Your wagon track is laid with steel; your tired dust is sleeping.
Your spirit stalks the valleys where a restive nation teems.
Your soul has never left them in their sowing and their reaping.

The children of the outward trail, their eyes are
full of dreams.
Pioneers, pioneers, your children will not reckon
The dangers on the dusky ways no man has ever gone.
They look beyond the sunset where the better
countries beckon,
With old faith, with bold faith, to find a wider dawn."

I. It has been a common thing in talking of the pioneer life of America and of pioneering in every sense to recount mostly the hardships and suffering which were encountered, but that is only one side of it. I have a conviction that the pioneer is not to be pitied, but to be envied.

First of all, he is to be envied for being what he is—for being of that rugged, vigorous spirit that seeks and dares adventure. Of the pioneers of the great Northwest, both from the Pilgrim strain from the Northeast and from the South, I have known much. Both my parents, one from ancestors born in the Virginia settlements and the other from Scotch pioneers bred in the colder North, crossed the plains in 1851 and 1852 and were married in Oregon, beside the beautiful Willamette. And I, being the first fruit of that union of two great pioneer strains, saw the virgin pioneer life on the last great frontier. Those adventurers across the

plains and over the Rockies by mule team, or, slower still, by oxen, were a virile and vital group of men and women. A splendid picture exists, to which has been given the significant title, "The Madonna of the Plains." It has caught the spirit of that heroic pioneer host that followed the Oregon trail to the sunset-sea. They exemplified the survival of the fittest—the cowards did not start and the weaklings died by the wayside. Those who reached the great forests and garden valleys beside the sunset-sea were brave and strong and buoyed by a dauntless spirit. They did not talk of hardships or pity themselves. They talked of difficulties only to tell how they surmounted them, and they rejoiced in the free, untrammeled life and opportunity which the rich and fertile new land, with its hospitable climate, gave them. True, they lived in log houses—rude and homely indeed, compared with the twentieth century mansion with its wealth of modern invention and conveniences, but the men and women who remember a childhood in the old log cabin of those frontier days look back to it with a pride that envies no one on earth.

"The old cabin made of logs, in the oak grove on the hill,
Where of morns the robins fussed, and of nights the whip-o'-will
Sent its call from afar; where the song of the stream
Came tip-toeing up the hill and mixed in with my dream
When I was a little tad, and the red squirrels used to run
From the trees to the roof when the morning was begun.
It is gone from the place where it stood on the brow
Of the hill—it is gone—it is blackened ruins now.

"I am glad it is gone—it is well that it should go.
It is gone with the ghosts of old days. I loved them so
That my eyes blur with tears as I sit and look away
Past the now to my youth and the joyous yesterday;
But my lips wear a smile—I am glad it is gone!
I believe that it stands out the other side of dawn,
And the souls of my loved ones will know it evermore,
And they wait as of old, just within the cabin door.

"Aye, they wait as of old, those whose love has long been dumb;
They are standing in the door, and they harken if I come
From the far-singing stream, from the wood on the hill;
And they smile as they hear the far-calling whip-o'-will;
And the light will flare out from south-looking friendly panes
As I drive the cattle home up along the winding lanes.
It is blackened ruins now to the passer, but to me
'Tis the ark of the loves of my life that used to be."

The pioneer not only has a life of constant interest and adventure, but he has a life of noble fellowship.

II. I have never, anywhere, seen a fellowship so fine and splendid as among the pioneers

on the Pacific Coast. It was as near the ideal democracy as can be imagined. No one was thought less of because he had no money or property; the only aristocracy known was that of character. Neighbors shared with each other as in a great brotherhood. If a man were sick or disabled, the neighbors got up his winter's wood, or gathered his crops in the autumn, or planted his crops in the spring. If his house burned, the whole country came together and built him a new one. The common feeling of sharing the hardships, the adventures, the joys and sorrows of a new land, bound them together with a bond stronger than that of kinship.

Because it is the nearest to that last great pioneer experience, and feels more strongly the gripping power of that great brotherly feeling, I think there is much truth in Arthur Chapman's song which Westerners love to quote:

"Out where the hand clasp's a little stronger,
Out where a smile dwells a little longer,
That's where the West begins.
Out where the sun's a little brighter,
Where the snow that falls is a trifle whiter,
Where the bonds of home are a wee bit tighter,
There's where the West begins.

"Out where the skies are a trifle bluer,
Out where friendship's a little truer,
That's where the West begins.
Out where a fresher breeze is blowing,
Where there's laughter in every streamlet flowing,
Where there's more of reaping and less of sowing,
That's where the West begins.

"Out where the world is in the making,
Where fewer hearts with despair are aching,
That's where the West begins.
Where there's more of singing and less of sighing,
Where there's more of giving and less of buying,
Where a man makes friends without half trying,
That's where the West begins."

Many of the noblest souls who have been the leaders of our nation in trying times have been the output of the splendid growth and development possible in a new land possest and dominated by the pioneer spirit. Abraham Lincoln, who stands before humanity as the supreme American, was the product of the spirit and the wide opportunity granted by pioneer life.

The pioneer could not help but grow in strength and in breadth of vision as he adventured into new lands, met difficulties as they came, and with splendid self-reliance faced and conquered all opposition of soil or forest or savage as it arose.

The pioneer met with splendid rewards.

He won wide opportunity for fertile fields. He was master of his own destiny and carved out a heritage for himself and for his children. He made his mark deep in the new land and it abides to this day. New England to-day is largely Irish, but the old Puritan has left his ineffaceable mark upon the land and much of his spirit still abides and dominates the soil where his pilgrim feet trod. The Cavalier and the Quaker as well as the old Hollander of New Amsterdam have left their footprints everywhere along the trail of their adventures.

But there are still higher realms in which the pioneer spirit is essential to the world's advancing civilizations and where the same laws hold true. Abraham was a pioneer of the faith in one true God— the Creator and Preserver of the universe. Abraham went into strange lands, "not knowing whither he went," with a brave, true heart; wherever he pitched his traveler's tent, there he built an altar unto the one true God. Angels were not unfamiliar guests in his camp, and throughout all the lands of the Orient he became known as "the friend of God." The happiest and most really

prosperous man in all the East of his day was Abraham, the pioneer.

So in later days. It has been a common thing to speak of the anti-slavery epoch as being one of cruel persecution and suffering for the Abolitionists, until many see only that side of that memorable time. But who in all that age lived lives more virile and interesting, lives so full of high purpose, of lofty ideals, of great and glorious fellowships, as William Lloyd Garrison, Wendell Phillips, Julia Ward Howe, Henry Ward Beecher, Horace Greeley, James Russell Lowell, Whittier, and a score of other great-brained, great-hearted men and women? They were the flaming torches of the whole Western world of their day, and their vital, overflowing zest of life and purpose illuminates a whole generation. These are the brightest, grandest, richest, human beings of an entire century of humanity. No one pities them to-day. They are among the immortals —the brightest stars in all the firmament of heaven for the ninteenth century.

So in the temperance reform, just come to its glorious triumph in our own land and pushing forward to victory throughout the world.

How insignificant seem the rebuffs and persecutions and hardships met a generation or so ago by Neal Dow and John P. St. John and Frances Willard and John G. Woolley and Howard H. Russell compared with the high and glorious achievements that will bless the world for all time to come through their splendid labors. Take the cause of woman's equality in all the arts and privileges and responsibilities of life, pioneered by women like Susan B. Anthony and Lucy Stone and Mary Livermore and Anna Shaw and a multitude of others—they stand to-day the women of fullest orb, who lived lives exalted and glorious, bearing freshest and richest fruitage for all humanity for all the years to come.

God give us pioneers for our own time! Never did the world have greater need of strong pioneer brain and spirit than in this great transition epoch. Here is the human race shaking off the green withes of kings, as Samson, the young Hebrew giant, broke the fetters of the Philistines. Who shall rise out of this dark night of chaos with strong brain and great heart and holy faith, but with the dawn of the new day in his face, ready to

pioneer humanity up and out of this Valley of Decision to the high tableland of a golden age for mankind? Oxenham sings:

"The World is in the Valley of Decision;
It is standing at the parting of the ways;
Will it climb the steps of God to realms elysian,—
Or fall on horror of still darker days?

"Will it free itself from every shameful shackle?
Will it claim the glorious freedom of the brave?
Will it lose the soul of life in this débacle,
And sink into a mean, dishonored grave?

"All the world is in the Valley of Decision,
And out of it there is but one sure road;
Eyes unsealed can still foresee the mighty vision
Of a world in travail turning unto God.

"All the world is in the Valley of Decision.
Who shall dare its future destiny foretell?
Will it yield its soul unto the Heavenly Vision,
Or sink despairing into its own hell?"

In this great birth-hour of the new epoch of the world let us never doubt for a moment that the cross on Calvary will yet win its great reward. God is not mocked. He will not be thwarted. What Christianity needs to-day is the faith of Abraham to obey God's call and go forth as he went, not knowing whither we

go, but following the guiding hand of him who holdeth the worlds in the hollow of his hand.

While in these critical transition days we wait the coming of humanity's pioneers for the new and glorious age about to dawn, let us have courage to sing with Sir Owen Seaman:

"Ye that have faith to look with fearless eyes
Beyond the tragedy of a world at strife,
And know that out of death and night shall rise
The dawn of ampler life.

"Rejoice, whatever anguish rend the heart,
That God has given you a priceless dower,
To live in these great times and have your part
In freedom's crowning hour.

"That ye may tell your sons who see the light
High in the heavens—their heritage to take—
'I saw the powers of darkness put to flight;
I saw the morning break'."

KEEPING THE SOUL ALIVE

"Man became a living soul."—Gen. 2:7.

MAN started as a living soul, but it has not been easy to keep his soul alive. There are so many things that overlie the soul and smother out the inner flame of life. Multitudes of people whose powers of body and mind on the side that deals with material things seem very much alive, who make a great deal of stir and noise in the world, are inhabited by—or, to speak more correctly, are living, walking, breathing coffins for—dead souls.

How refreshing it is to see a soul entirely alive, alive clear through, at every point of possible contact and control with the world in which they are placed.

Gladstone was that kind of man. There were greater scholars in England than he, there were men superior in very many things. But he dominated English life for two generations,

and largely influenced the world, because he was inhabited by the livest soul in England in his day. Sir Sidney Colvin, in his recently published *Personal Recollections,* says that while there never was in any community an individual man the sense of whose existence was so constantly and so forcibly present to the general mind as was that of Gladstone to the English mind during his long public life, it was not merely the prodigious energy he displayed and the victories he achieved in legislative and administrative spheres that caused him to occupy the public consciousness, but it was the sense, pervading the whole English world of his day, of his possessing in an extraordinary degree a heightened intensity of being. Which is only another way of saying that the whole English-speaking world saw in Mr. Gladstone the livest soul of his age.

Abraham Lincoln was awkward and uncouth and unlearned—not an experienced diplomat or lawyer like Seward, not a scholar like Chase, not an orator like Wendell Phillips, not a leader of armies like Grant or Sherman; but he had, out of a grossly material time when men bargained in human flesh, saved his soul

alive, and that live soul in which the torch of liberty and humanity never died down, led the nation through its Gethsemane like the pillar of fire that guided Israel from Egypt.

Roosevelt was such a man, with a soul alive at a hundred angles. In office or out of office did not count with him: he was as powerful in his leadership of the nation in one place as the other, because the whole world of friends or foes recognized in him a soul alive with vital fire. He led not because he was a great orator, or a great writer, or a great executive, or a great soldier. No, it was something more elemental, more divine than that. All America, whether they loved or hated him, whether they doubted or trusted him, knew he was alive at every point of his being. He was all aflame with purpose fed from within.

Now do not let any of us fail of the comfort of these illustrations because I have used these world characters to illuminate our theme. It is as true of men and women who walk in quiet streets and shaded country lanes as of these men on the larger stage of life, that it is the soul within which alone has power to make life interesting and splendid—

"Truth is within ourselves; it takes no rise
From outward things, whate'er you may believe:
There is an inmost center in us all,
Where truth abides in fulness; . . .
. . . and 'to know'
Rather consists in opening out a way
Whence the imprisoned splendor may escape,
Than in effecting entry for a light
Supposed to be without."

It has been quite popular in some scientific circles of our time to deride the deep emotions and feelings of the heart as of small account. The great Herbert Spencer, however, held that the emotions are the masters and the intellect the servant. I have been recently reading a contemporary scientific essay which quotes with approval the lines of the poet who so reverently sings:

"For feeling is a teacher; every dream
That makes us purer makes us wiser too,
And every beauty coming on a beam
Of God's sweet sunlight brings new truth to view.

"And feeling is a worker; at the base
Of earth's deep action lies earth's deeper thought;
And lower still than thought is feeling's place,
Which heaves the whole mass duly as it ought."

Do not for a moment doubt that our theme is of the greatest practical importance to the

happiness of every one of us. Given a live soul, and no path can be so walled about that you will not be able to bring to your knowledge and consciousness sufficient of the riches of the universe to feed your joy.

Skeptics have sometimes sneered at the Old Testament story of Moses meeting with God in the burning bush as he followed his sheep on the slopes of Mount Horeb. Joseph Edgar Chamberlin, however, tells a beautiful story of a similar finding of God and his handiwork by a little invalid girl who had always been confined to a poor city house, for the most of the time bedridden; who had never been in the country or even in a city park, but had been taught to read and write. This little girl was often visited by a bright, good woman whom she called her teacher, and for this teacher she wrote a little composition called "Spring." In this paper the little girl said that spring came first with a gentle flush that was a kind of pink and a kind of yellow; that presently it became yellower, and then all at once a beautiful light green, which soon turned to a darker green. She also said that sometimes spring came earlier than at other times, and that when it came

late it was hard to wait for it; yet it was just as nice to have it come late, because when it did it was all the more beautiful, and burst out first with flowers and then with many leaves all at once. The woman who was called "teacher" wondered greatly at this little essay with its vivid and graphic description, because she knew the child had never read of these stages of springtime color in any book and she was also amazed at the confident feeling and passion in the details of springtime by a writer who had never seen it. She asked the little girl what she meant by writing in that way about the spring when she had never seen it. The child, her face falling, answered, "But I have seen it in the Donelly's bush!" And then the visitor saw that, by looking in a small mirror that hung on the wall, the bedridden child had a view of a neighbor's backyard, and in that yard a small willow tree grew, leaning away from the brick wall—a tree much stunted in height, but yet stocky and thrifty, and bearing a luxurious mass of pendent leaves. Here was all nature, and God with it, in a bush. The spring had been there and none of it left out; for all of the abounding spring that did not

come to the little willow tree was as naught to the keen and reverent eyes of the child.

I thought, as I read that sweet little story, how many great, robust owners of thousands of acres of forest and hills and valleys traversed by babbling brooks or sweeping rivers have seen the miracle of God's glory in springtime come and go a score of times and yet never have had a tithe of its inspiring story. Yet it was caught by the little lame girl in her narrow room through a handbreadth of mirror. Her soul was alive.

How I would thank God if I could bring to each one of you the message for you personally that you need out of this great theme!

Some of you are making the great mistake, I fear, of gaining things—houses, lands, bonds, or honors, or positions—at the expense of the prosperity, the very life, of your soul. It is such a pitiful tragedy. Here is a bright man, good body, keen mind, inherited ability, who marries a charming young girl, and they start out with all the glow of youth and the gladness of living as mates in God's good world. Soon our hero is immersed in the world's work: his profession or his business absorbs him; it goes

home with him and makes the evening fireside heavy and dull: and love that filled his soul for a brief epoch with higher ideals and nobler joy than he had ever known is allowed to die down about the home altar. He tells his wife that when he has won his place and position, has achieved his success, he will make up to her for all her lonely evenings. Alas! how impossible ever to make up for losses like that. When the children come and the miracle of childhood fills the home, the worn and tired man has no time, he says, to get acquainted with his children and enter into fellowship with them, but after a little he will—as soon as he has won a competency and has time and money to rest, then he is going to make up to his wife for all her lonely, loveless years and rejoice in the glad fellowship with his sons and daughters. Oh, how many tragedies like that I have come in touch with in my experience as a minister! When the time comes to retire, the mate of his youth has no longer any flame of response even if he had the power to make the appeal for her love, and his children have gone their own way and made their own friends, and he has neither the ability nor the key to reach their hearts.

His soul is dead, overlaid by his lifetime struggle after dross, when the true gold of life was at his hand for the taking in his own home. There are no greater tragedies than those, and none more common. The younger Margaret E. Sangster, following in the footsteps of her sainted mother, sings of this sort of tragedy with keen poetic insight:

"I started out in a cloak of pride,
With talent, too, that I did not hide;
I started out on Life's stony road,
Ambition's weight was my only load;
And the way seemed fair in the dawn's first glow,
And I hurried—ran—*for I did not know!*

"Love smiled from a garden by the way,
And called to me, but I would not stray
From the road that stretched like a ribbon white,
Up endless hills to an endless night.
Love smiled at me, but I pushed ahead,
And Love fell back in the garden—dead,
But I did not care as I hastened by,
And I did not pause for regret or sigh . . .
The road before was a path of hope,
And every hill with its gentle slope
Led up to the heights I had dreamed and prayed
To reach some day.
Ah, I might have stayed
With Love and Youth in the garden gay,
That smiled at me from beside the way.

"I plodded up, and the gentle hills
Grew hard to climb, and the laughing rills
Were torrents peopled with sodden forms;
The sky grew black with the hint of storms,
And rocks leaped out, and they bruised my feet,
And faint I grew in the fever heat.
(But ever on led the path that lay
As gray as the dust in the waning day.)
My back was bent, and my heart was sore,
And the cloak of pride that I grandly wore
Was rent and patched for all eyes to see—
Ambition, talent seemed naught to me . . .
But I struggled on till I reached the top,
For only then did I dare to stop!

"I stood on the summit gazing down,
And the earth looked sordid and dull and brown,
And neutral-tinted and neutral-souled;
And all of life seemed a story told,
And the only spot that was bright to see
Was a patch of green that had bloomed for me
Where a garden lived in a spring long fled,
When Love stood smiling—
But Love was dead!"

Let us close our sermon with a cheerier note. We may keep our souls alive. Jesus says, "The kingdom of God is within you," and Paul declares that its substance is joy and peace and true goodness. He also declares that the joy of the Lord is our strength. Emerson meant the same when he said:

"Nothing will supply the want of sunshine in peaches, and

to make knowledge valuable, you must have the cheerfulness of wisdom. Whenever you are sincerely pleased you are nourished. The joy of the spirit indicates strength—all healthy things are sweet-tempered. Genius works in sport, and goodness smiles to the last; and for the reason that whoever sees the law which distributes things does not despond, but is animated by great desires and endeavors. He who desponds betrays that he has not seen it."

How good it is to live in God's bright, pulsing, thrilling world, all aquiver with vitality—with a live soul in you to rejoice in its beauties and glories!

The man who keeps his soul alive wins even when he loses. There is a beautiful glimpse of this happy thought in a delicious little story by Wm. J. Locke, called "The Song of Life," in his new volume of short stories. With characteristic grace and beauty he tells of an old musician, popular in his day as a violinist, who all his life long had held as his supreme ambition the purpose to compose a great sonata. He felt that he had a divine message to proclaim to the world, a song of life itself, a revelation. It was life indestructible, eternal. It was the seed that grew into the giant tree. It was the kiss of lovers that, when they were dead and gone, lived immortal on the lips of grand-

children. It was in his brain and heart—the cosmic chant, the rhythm of existence, telling of things as only music could tell them, and as no musician had ever told them before. It was the great dream of his life, but he lacked the genius to tell it so as to bring out his dream to the recognition of the world. He grew old, and to keep the wolf from the door, taught pupils from humble homes. Providence directed to his humble attic studio a rare young genius in music who drank his loving teaching as a thirsty flower drinks rain, and became a famous composer. Finally the day came when this beloved pupil was to have his supreme opportunity to show the greatness of his powers. His success was phenomenal—he took the whole musical world by storm: and while this splendid symphony was being given the old teacher fainted. The next day the now famous pupil went to his faithful teacher's studio to lay his honors at the old man's feet, and found the studio empty; but on the desk he found the old man's draft of the very symphony which had won his own world-wide fame the day before, except for the touches the young man's own genius had given it. It seems the young

man had bought in a second-hand store a piece of music, impossible as it was, but in which he saw the great possibilities. He supposed it was from the hand of some long dead unknown composer and had bought it and found in it the foundation of his own greatness—and now when he found that he had seemingly won his great fame at the expense of his old friend he was heart-broken and feared to meet him. As he stood thus, overwhelmed with grief, the old musician burst into the room with a shout of joy. He rushed forward and grasped the young man in his arms and kissed him on the cheeks and cried:

"You have seen it. You have seen the miracle; the miracle of the good God. Oh, I am happy! My son, my son! I am the happiest of old men. Ah!" He shook the young man tremulously by both shoulders, and looked at him with a magical light in his old eyes. "You are . . . really a prodigy—I have thought and you have executed. Santa Maria!" he cried, raising his hands and eyes to heaven. "I thank you for this miracle that has been done! I spent my life on it, my blood, my tears, and it is a thing of nothing, nothing. It is a thing of wind and noise; but by a miracle of God I breathed it into your spirit and it grew—and it grew into all I dreamed—all that I dreamed and could not express. It is my 'Song of Life' sung as I could have sung it if I had been a great genius like you. And you have taken my song from my soul, from my heart, and all the sublime harmonies that got no farther than this dull head you have put down in immortal music."

Who will say that the old musician was not a conqueror in the battle of life. He had kept his soul alive. God give us the same glorious wisdom! Let us give the world all the inspiring music there is in us to give, and pray God that those who come after us shall render a still more splendid paean to him!

THE PERSONALITY OF JESUS

"We would see Jesus."—John 12:21.

IT was a favorite theory of Emerson that every great institution was the lengthening shadow of some great man. Mohammed lived and thought and saw visions and taught, and Mohammedanism is his lengthening shadow. A man named John Wesley lived and studied and thought and saw visions and taught, and warmed his heart: he preached and traveled, by sailing vessel and on horseback, until his flaming evangel was heard to the frontiers of the world, and Methodism is his lengthening shadow. All great religious movements have a similar story.

So Christianity as a whole, exprest in many great churches and denominations covering the earth with their activity, is the lengthening shadow of Jesus Christ who was born in a manger, crucified, buried in Joseph's tomb, and, risen from the dead, is alive for evermore.

There could be no more important study for the Christian than the personality of Jesus, for Christianity is peculiarly a personal religion. It is not a system of philosophy or theology, tho vast systems of philosophy and theology have been built up about it, until they seem sometimes so to hide the face of Jesus that we feel like crying with Mary Magdalene, "They have taken away my Lord, and I know not where they have laid him."

The religion of Christ is personal. All the appeals of Jesus are for personal followers, personal service, personal friendship and loyalty. He passed by the fishermen who were mending their nets and said to them, "Come ye after me, and I will make you fishers of men." There is not a word about creed or dogma—it is a personal appeal for a personal following.

This personal following after Jesus has led to the rise and growth of all these great lines of religious thought, these great bodies of religious people, who march under different denominational banners, tho all recognize a common allegiance to the personal Christ as their captain and Leader and Savior.

This vast variety of views about Jesus does not arise from the sinfulness of men, as some have supposed, but rather from the many-sided personality of Christ. It is like getting a view of a vast mountain: If you look at Mt. Rainier from Seattle, it gives you one impression. If you gaze on it from Tacoma, it is quite a different picture, and if you cross the Cascades and look back at it from the Yakima Valley, you have an entirely new vision. So the marvelous personality of Jesus, whose dome reaches up to the throne of God, whose base reaches down to the humblest stratum of our humanity, does not, in the nature of things can not, give the same impression to all who behold him, to all who are equally loyal to him and draw from him the spiritual sustenance and maintenance of their soul's life.

I have chosen this theme to invite you to look at Jesus from my viewpoint. No doubt some one else may be able to show you a very different view which is equally true to life, but this is my view—the great vision from my standpoint of sight.

I. In my view of Jesus he is always young. His mother was a healthy, outdoor, country

girl who brought to her son on his human side clean red blood from an honest ancestry. He had the health of a youth who is much in the open air and lives on plain food. We know he was a strong baby, for he first saw the light in a manger in a stable and seemed to get no hurt from the hard surroundings. He grew up in the country, learned the plants and the trees and the birds and the wild animals, their names and their habits. He grew up a working boy, helping his carpenter foster father at such carpentering as belonged to those days. He was a vigorous boy, athletic and manly. He stuck to his work as a carpenter until he was thirty years old, then went forth to his public ministry, which lasted but three years, a fine specimen of manhood. He could walk or talk or work all day and sleep on the mountain at night, resting on the ground with only the sky overhead, without shelter and without fear of ill effects from it. This square-shouldered young country carpenter, with eager, brave eyes, yet with a volcano in them when aroused, with a voice as sweet as the tones of a meadow lark but with power to command when quickened and thrilled by emotion, is my Christ as he enters on his public ministry.

Jesus was the most wonderful democrat among the men of his day—a great many classes of people were attracted to him. And those same classes are still attracted to him when we are wise enough to show them the real manliness of the Man of Galilee. Sufferers have always been peculiarly drawn to Jesus and have been comforted by him. "Oh," you say, "that is natural. It is because he was such a great sufferer himself on the cross." I do not believe that is all. Is it not rather that Christ was a great sufferer who suffered without whining about it; who suffered without pitying himself; even on the way to the cross he said to his friends, "Weep not for me." He never gave up to suffering: his purpose in life was so great and noble and sublime that suffering was only an insignificant incident of life and not the big thing. He knew he was going to Jerusalem to be abused and rejected and crucified, yet Luke says, "he steadfastly set his face toward Jerusalem." He did not flinch. He was vital, full of the vigor and glory of young manhood, enjoying life as only a divine mind with a pure heart in a healthy body thirty-three years old can enjoy it; yet he set

his countenance like a flint toward Jerusalem and went with a smile on his face, opening blind eyes, comforting sufferers, and leaving a path strewn with the fragrance of good will and love every step of the way. That is what makes Jesus the supreme comforter for sufferers in every age.

Poor people liked Jesus. "The common people heard him gladly," and they still like him when they get a true vision of him. Not because he was poor—there is nothing attractive about that—but because he triumphed over all the ordinary limitations of poverty. He never lost his courage, or his self-respect, or his dignity or simplicity or manliness, because of his poverty. He never fawned, or flattered, or catered because he was poor. His life and character showed that money, or the lack of it, has no power to make or unmake real manhood. He was a living example of his own declaration: "A man's life consisteth not in the abundance of the things which he possesseth."

A great many rich people were attracted to Jesus because, notwithstanding the fact that he truthfully said of himself, "The foxes have

holes, the birds of the air have nests; but the Son of man hath not where to lay his head," his life was evidently much richer than their own. Money and worldly possessions in the mind of most people mean satisfaction, contentment, happiness, freedom, and peace. Jesus had these in greater fullness than any man of his day. He was, in spite of his lack of the wealth which they had been taught to prize, the richest man they knew, and they sought to learn his secret.

Sinful people, whose lives were offensive to the moral standards of their day, flocked to him because, while his goodness condemned their sin, there was about him an atmosphere of sympathy and helpfulness as healing and wholesome as the sunshine or the breath of the sea. They were drawn from their sins to Jesus because his goodness was not hard or cynical, but was sweetened with love and mercy. "Like as a father pitieth his children" or as a mother comforteth her child, so Christ's goodness went forth ministering to sinful souls, seeking to heal and to save.

All good people loved Jesus because of his

openness of mind and heart and his complete genuineness and sincerity.

Then a great many who were not very clearly defined in any of these classes liked Jesus, and were strongly attracted by the remarkable magnetism of his personality. He was splendid looking, he had the look of power, he was witty in a wholesome, glad way. He was a brilliant conversationalist, his keen mind went to the core of every question. He was happy, sympathetic, and gracious. He was popular as a dinner guest—wherever he sat with his interesting talk, his glowing countenance, his flashing eager eye, and contagious joyous laughter, that place was the head of the table. He was a social lion until the classes who hated him aroused the forces that finally put him to death. For there were certain elements of society and government that naturally and irrevocably became arrayed against him and pursued him stedfastly to the death.

Caste hated him because he stood for manhood. Priestcraft hated him because he stood for an open road to the heart of God Autocracy hated him because he stood for the brotherhood of humanity. He was the first great

herald of what we have come to call "democracy" in our modern world. He did not stand as a partizan for any class of men as a class. He did not stand for poor men or rich men, as such. He did not stand for ignorant men or learned men, as such. He did not stand for bad men or for good men, as such. He stood for men. Every man, rich or poor, learned or ignorant, good or bad, has his noblest ideal and his supreme advocate in Jesus Christ.

Both ecclesiastical and secular politicians hated Jesus and feared him because the aggressive righteousness and justice which he preached and the character of manhood he proclaimed were disturbers of the established order. Pilate, with many protests and washing of his hands before the public, finally crucified him as a political measure.

II. Now we have seen the human side of the personality of this democratic Christ. Let us look at the divine side of this most glorious character in all history. To me it is self-evident that you can not account for the personality of Jesus merely by saying that he is a good man: to accept his divine nature in a human body is

to believe only one miracle, to try to explain the marvelous personality of Christ as simply a good man involves you in the acceptance of many miracles. If you find it hard to understand the divine character of Jesus, get Horace Bushnell's little book entitled *The Character of Jesus.* I think it will clear away your difficulties to your great comfort and blessing.

Bushnell brings out, with graphic clearness, what Paul means when he speaks of Christ as, "God manifest in the flesh"; and again when he says, "God was in Christ, reconciling the world unto himself."

Let me suggest some of these phases of the divine character of Christ's personality that are to me full of assurance:

The mental and spiritual personality of Jesus is utterly without flaw, above and beyond criticism. This can not be said of the best men who have ever lived. It was not true of his human body. Strong and athletic as was the body of Christ, it was subject to hunger and thirst and weariness, and was delicately sensitive to pain: but on the mental and spiritual side he had the serenity and calmness of God. He had red blood. Passion of the highest

power sometimes exprest itself in indignation or tears; but it was never for himself, it was always the moving of a great, divine soul for others. There is an old saying that, "No man is a hero to his valet." Which means that a great occasion like the leading of a forlorn hope or martyrdom for a great cause will nerve a brave soul to the supreme patience and fortitude necessary to meet fate with composure; but the petty annoyances of every-day life will fret and chafe the spirit of even great men and make their conduct anything but heroic. There was nothing of that about Jesus. To the very last the men who saw every detail of his daily life were the men who honored him most and were surest of his divine personality.

Christ is the greatest spiritual teacher the world has ever known, and yet he does not come from the world's schools. His neighbors who knew his whole outward life were astonished and could not understand the source of his wisdom. In Matt. 13: 54 we hear them asking, "Whence hath this man this wisdom?"

Compare Shakespeare with Christ and this marvelous difference between Jesus and other

men is at once apparent. Shakespeare is regarded as perhaps the most original of men and also as of the class of self-made men, yet all his work is tinged with human learning. The chief glory of Shakespeare is that so much of what is great in history and historic character lives and appears in his dramatic creations. He is sometimes called the high priest of human nature. But Christ, "who knew what was in man," understanding human nature better than Shakespeare, derives no help from historic examples. He is, rather, the High Priest of the divine nature, speaking as one who has come, as he claimed to have come, as a messenger from God, and having no need to borrow from the world. It is impossible to find that human knowledge imparted anything whatever to the wisdom of Jesus. His teachings, as Bushnell aptly puts it, are just as full of divine nature as Shakespeare's are of human nature.

Jesus himself said, "I am the light of the world," and he makes the world luminous by his words. When you read the words of Jesus you are made conscious of a sense of the presence of God, just as when you step out of the house on the morning of a clear day you are

made conscious of the presence of the warmth and light of the sun.

Jesus was the world's greatest Reformer, and yet he had none of the frailties and faults that have been common to reformers. Usually they are not well-rounded characters: many become bitter and harsh and unlovable because of unjust criticism of their work and unfair opposition. They often become one-sided and opinionated: sometimes as sharp as a needle, but no broader than a needle. Jesus faced unfair and cruel criticism, unjust and hypocritical opposition, and yet went serenely on his way to scourging and crucifixion; suffering no deterioration of his temper or character, but retaining in his nature all the spiritual graces. Call over the whole list of graces which Paul mentions in his letter to the Galatians: "The fruit of the spirit is love, joy, peace, long-suffering, kindness, goodness, faithfulness, meekness, self-control." Where did Paul get that list? He learned them all at the feet of Jesus. He saw them in the face of Christ and heard them in the heavenly music of his voice.

The courage of Jesus was not the ordinary courage of brave men but rather the courage of

God. He seems not to have had the consciousness of fear as the bravest men have. He never shirked or dodged any danger. He did not shrink from saying and doing things that he knew meant death.

He was never annoyed by beggars. He was never afraid of lepers; but put his loving hands upon them and healed them. He had no fear of fevers or contagious diseases of any sort. He did not shrink from the maniac of his day, whom every one, even those thus afflicted, believed to be possest of demons; he found joy in relieving their suffering. He said, "My meat and drink is to do the will of him that sent me," and tho we know his supreme joy was to transform the souls of men and women, yet he was "touched by the feeling of our infirmities." So greatly was he touched that among the works of mercy in connection with which he gave us precious promises of reward were the feeding of the hungry, the clothing of the naked, and the visiting of those who were sick and imprisoned. He sent forth his disciples with the commission not only to preach the kingdom of God, but to heal the sick.

We often hear men say, "Ah, could we but

see him upon the streets of our cities, as the Bible says he was in those Galilean cities, doing those miracles of healing!" They may see him in ten thousand hospitals wherever his disciples dwell. They may see him in the garb of the Christian deaconesses and district nurses in the slums of our cities. They may see him in the medical missions of heathen lands. They may see him on the battlefields of France and Belgium, where thousands lie sleeping because they gave their lives for human liberty, and in the Christian love which solaced their dying hours. They may see him in the weary hours of some overworked employer striving to do the Christian thing in solving the profit system for his employees. They may see him in the work of our public schools with education for all—rich and poor alike, and in the employment of doctors, dentists, and nurses in those public schools as is now becoming common, to look after each and every child, in order that the child of the poor man may have an equal opportunity physically with the child of the rich; and that no child, rich or poor, shall be allowed through lack of understanding or inability on the part of a parent to

grow up hampered and bound physically and mentally by the ills common to childhood, or his years shortened by the ignorance of his elders; but that the whole race may be lifted up and improved by the care of all alike. Oh, this is a great day for the world, when the spirit of democracy or brotherhood (call it what you may, it is the spirit of Jesus Christ), prompts us to seek for the child of the poorest neighbor the same happy, healthy childhood, the same privileges and opportunities that we seek for our own. In the love that prompts such service to humanity you may see the face of Jesus.

"It were not hard, He says, to see Him,
If we would only serve;
'He that doeth the will of Heaven,
To him shall knowledge and sight be given'.
While for His presence we sit repining,
Never we see His countenance shining;
They who toil where His reapers be
The glow of his smile may always see,
And their faith can never swerve.
It were not hard, He says, to see Him,
If we would only serve."

Another evidence of the divine courage of Jesus is that he had no fear of scandal; he paid no attention to the cry that he was the guest of

a sinner, and went to dinner with publicans. He did not shun harlots, but talked with them on the public street with the same naturalness and simplicity and kindness that he would talk with the most honored matron of the town. He walked the way of life not as a man, but with the authority and nobility of God.

The most glorious hope of humanity is that as the divine nature was incarnated in Jesus, so Christ can live again manifesting himself in us. Paul, in his letter to the Galatians, says, "It pleased God to reveal himself in me." And to the Colossians Paul writes of "Christ in you, the hope of glory." What a glorious hope, that we may so surrender ourselves to the will of God and the service of humanity that the matchless personality of Jesus shall live in our hearts and minds and beautify and glorify our lives.

As Doctor Clow points out in one of his fine sermons, it is not beyond the range of our human experience to have one personality invade and possess another. Browning with characteristic spiritual insight illustrates this possibility in his poem "By the Fireside." He portrays a husband and wife sitting by the open fire in

the evening. They have lived long together in pure and loving fellowship. They are growing old. The husband tells the wife how beautifully her personality and character have entered into his:

> "My own, see where the years conduct,
> At first 'twas something our two souls
> Should mix as mists do: each is sucked
> In each now: on the new stream rolls,
> Whatever rocks obstruct."

That is the husband's first statement of this strange possession of his own personality by the woman he loves. He recalls the closer and more tender intimacy of spirit with spirit as life went on and finally passes to the scene of perfect consummation. It came as they stood at the close of day on a rustic bridge over a quiet stream:

> "A moment after, and hands unseen
> Were hanging the night around us fast;
> But we knew that a bar was broken between
> Life and life: we were mixed at last
> In spite of the mortal screen."

And so it is when we walk with God through our friendship with Jesus, surrendering the guidance of life to him. He is in us the hope

of glory, and his spirit controls our conduct and is revealed in us, to the blessing of all the world about us.

It would make me very glad if I might inspire the imagination of some of you who have lived all your lives within hearing of Christ's voice, and within sight of his face in Bible and music and literature and art and faithful Christlike living of some true saint, and yet have never really seen Jesus. Oh, that I might give you a glimpse of his glorious ability to lift you out of the humdrum of mere material life into the divine fellowship that will make your life infinitely more interesting and splendid.

When I follow Jesus during his three years of ministry and see him feed the hungry, heal the blind and the deaf and the crippled: when I watch him as he makes the palsied arm whole, quiets the fevered brow, and cleanses the loathsome leper: when I stand by him at the grave of Lazarus, and at the bier of the widow's son in the town of Nain, I admire and wonder: but when I see him lay hold on a soul, such as the poor harlot Mary Magdalene, or the hard miser Zacchaeus, and lift them out of lust and greed into goodness and honor: when I see him re-

deeming sinners like these from the foul slime where they grovel without hope, and transforming them into the purity of heaven and the fellowship of the skies, I fall on my knees and cry, "My Lord and my God."

THE SOURCES OF STRENGTH

"Be strong."—1 Cor. 16:13.

A WISE man of old said that the glory of young men is their strength. Is it not true of all men? God needs strong men to do his work in the world. Not only men strong in muscle and brawn, tho those are not to be spoken of disparagingly, but also men of power in intellect and will and feeling. The world needs full-rounded, well-equipped strength of manhood to do the full meed of service that the world must have in this great crisis in which we live. Maltby Babcock's little song needs to be sounded in the ears of men everywhere to-day:

"Be strong,
We are not here to play, to dream, to drift,
We have hard work to do and loads to lift;
Shun not the struggle, face it, 'tis God's gift,
Be strong."

We are fortunate in our text to have surrounding it Paul's undoubted idea of the characteristics of a strong man—the sources from which strength in manhood can always be had.

I. Paul suggests that the strong man is the alert man—"Watch ye!" The man who is always awake about his work, always watching for the very best knowledge he can find for his profession or his business, is the man who will grow strong. He is never willing that any one should know more about the particular work he has in hand than he knows. He wants to know the latest thing in science or research of any kind connected with his work. If he is a business man, his associates in the street will say of him, perhaps, "He is a live wire." If he is a statesman or a poet or a prophet, the world will say of him, "He is a man of vision."

The man who grows strong has the air and spirit of expectancy. He is ready for the adventure of the new day and the new advance of life. This is especially true in the spiritual world, where we are dealing with character, and with the opportunities and privileges of service to humanity. Some poet sings:

"'Tis not for man to trifle; life is brief,
And sin is here.
Our age is but the falling of a leaf,
A dropping tear.
We have no time to sport away the hours,
All must be earnest in a world like ours.

"Not many lives, but only one have we,
One, only one,
How earnest should that one life be,
That narrow span;
Day after day spent out in blessed toil,
Hour after hour still bringing in new spoil."

Paul himself is a fine illustration of that eagerness of expectancy that is never satisfied with the present but is always looking to the future with earnest hope of still nobler achievement. He is the man whose golden age is never behind him but is always looming up ahead of him in splendid anticipation. Hence, we hear Paul saying: "This one thing I do, forgetting those things which are behind, and reaching forth unto those things which are before, I press toward the mark for the prize of the high calling of God in Christ Jesus."

All this suggests to us that the strong man is a growing man. And that power or determination of the will to be alert and eager for new sources of strength, new impulse, makes

the great difference in men as to weakness or strength. The man who never allows life to become stale, who never loses his curiosity of mind, and has the courage to put every bit of knowledge he attains into action, is the man who grows in strength. David Grayson says that there is nothing strange about great men; they are like us, only deeper, higher, broader. They think as we do, but they are more eager, have more intensity; they suffer as we do, but more keenly; they love as we do, but more tenderly. By which he means just what we have been saying, that it is the eager, expectant man who gains strength and becomes great. I think this is very encouraging to each of us. This source of strength is within arm's reach of every one. It is needed only that you set your alarm clock. Watch, keep awake, to catch the miracle of opportunity every day of your life for the highest things, the noblest chance for service, the truest helpfulness. If we put into action the thoughts and vision God gives us, we shall grow in strength.

II. Paul's second characteristic of a strong man is faith. "Stand fast in the faith." I think Paul meant nothing narrow by that. He

meant, no doubt, first of all, faith in God and Christ and the great spiritual truths. But undoubtedly Paul meant also that the man of faith was a man who was stedfast in the great principles of truth that had come to him as a Christian, who would not sell his principles, whom nothing could bribe from standing fast in the thing that he believed to be right, who would go, as Paul himself did, into Nero's dungeon or to the executioner's block rather than deny his faith. To die seemed to Paul very much easier than to be false. Paul did not feel that it was necessary for him to live, but it was imperative for him to be a good man and true.

How different that attitude is from the superficial sophistries we sometimes hear. Here are some modern verses that are not too scornful:

"'A man must live!' we justify
Low shift and trick to treason high,
A little vote for a little gold,
To a whole senate bought and sold,
With this self-evident reply.

"But is it so? Pray tell me why
Life at such cost you have to buy?
In what religion were you told
'A man must live?'
There are times when a man must die.

"Imagine for a battle cry
From soldiers with a sword to hold,
From soldiers with a flag unrolled,
The coward's whine, this liar's lie,
'A man must live!'"

I suppose there was no men of his age who held the romantic admiration of the young men of the world and of the most powerful men of all ages more than the man who is known as Chinese Gordon, that remarkable English soldier and statesman and Christian, who was martyred at Khartum. Huxley, who differed from him so widely in Christian faith, used to speak of him as one of the two greatest men he ever met, a man of a sort of divine and superhuman unselfishness. Robert Speer, in one of his great lectures in his series on *The Marks of a Man,* gives the most interesting estimate of what it was that made him great. He tells of three monuments to Chinese Gordon. First, there is the statue that stands in Trafalgar Square, with the poor, sad face turned toward the help that was not to come. Then there is that magnificent inscription on the stone in St. Paul's Cathedral in London: it describes Gordon as a man "who at all times and everywhere gave his strength to the weak, his sub-

stance to the poor, his sympathy to the suffering, and his heart to God." But there is another monument finer still. It is a life figure of Chinese Gordon seated on a dromedary, planted in what will some day be the center of the city of Khartum. It is now in the great gardens just back of the palace. And in that great statue the face of Gordon is not turned toward the Nile, by which he might have escaped; it is not turned toward Egypt, through which help too late was on its way; it is turned, with the face of the dromedary on which he is mounted, out toward the great desert whose voice he alone heard, whose opportunities he alone saw. That, as Newbolt puts it in his lines on Gordon, was the real greatness of the man:

"For this man was not great by gold or royal state,
By sharp sword or knowledge of earth's wonder:
But, more than all his race, he saw life face to face,
And heard the still, small voice above its thunder."

Oh, my friends, that must be our great source of strength as well as Gordon's, to look into any desert of life and listen with the inner ear of the soul until we hear the still, small voice:

"So many ways in the world—ah me!
That a man may follow, a woman travel
So many paths, whatever they be,
Wherever they go, that none unravel,
So many roads where we win or lose,
So many ways so hard to choose
So much that's hidden, so little light—
The only thing, whatever we do,
Is to follow the voice of the soul that's true—
The still, small voice that leads us right."

This is the voice that Moses heard out of the burning bush; the voice that Elijah heard above the storm in his mountain cave on Horeb; the voice that Chinese Gordon heard in his last hour. When we, too, listen to God, and stand stedfast in the faith in God who is back of and over all things, our weakness is transformed into strength.

III. Paul's third characteristic of the strong man is gameness. "Quit you like men!" says Paul. How does that sound in your ears? Don't you hear Paul saying in the language of the ball game, or the market-place, "Be a game sport! Don't whine! If you are knocked down in the game of life, don't take it lying down; get up again; rub the sand out of your eyes, and go ahead with a game smile on your face and win the victory that is yet to come!"

I have no doubt but this language would astonish Paul, yet I feel very sure that he would agree that it is a fair interpretation of what he meant when he wrote to the men of his time, "Quit you like men!"

I was reading the other day the story of a Yorkshire man who, sick of his life, went out one moonlight night and rigged up his gun in the woods, and put the muzzle of it against his head, and was about to push the trigger with his toe, when something stirred in his heart. He looked up and saw the moonlight filtering down through the leaves, and he kicked his gun into the thicket, and drawled: "Naw, I'll not do it. There's zummat in me aside the dog. I'll live game and zee it through"; And he went back to live his life, game to see it through.

I think that is what Paul meant—that however many the difficulties that assail me as I dream my dreams and try to realize them in life, I am no man if I will not live game and see it through. Many men have had their greatest triumphs after they have gone down into the depths, like the old Yorkshire man.

How many men there are who have risen out of what seemed a complete knockout in the

battle of life, who owe the courage and game spirit with which they met the future and overcame to a hand they stretched out in friendship and love. In my long experience as a minister and pastor of large aggregations of men and women, whenever I have seen a virile, strong man who has failed and then risen again and struggled on to higher victories than ever, I have learned to look for some good woman, who, it may be out of sight of the public, has thrown herself into the breach, and by her love given the nerve and inspiration and courage for this new battle that changed a beaten man into a conqueror. Everard Jack Appleton has given us a wonderful poem, perhaps in answer to Kipling's remarkable creation *The Vampire.* Appleton writes of *The Woman Who Understands.* How graphically he portrays her:

"Somewhere she waits to make you win,
Your soul in her firm white hands—
Somewhere the gods have made for you,
The Woman Who Understands!

"As the tide went out she found him
Lashed to a spar of despair,
The wreck of his ship around him,
The wreck of his dreams in the air;
Found him, and loved him, and gathered

The soul of him close to her heart—
Leading him back to his standards lost,
Guarding his soul, whatever the cost—
That soul of which she was part,
Helping and loving him ever. Therein
She gave him the strength to fight, and to win.

"This is the story of ages,
This is the woman's way;
Wiser than seers or sages,
Lifting us day by day;
Facing all things with a courage
Nothing can daunt or dim,
Treading life's path wherever it leads—
Lined with flowers or choked with weeds,
But ever with him—with him!
Guardian—comrade—golden spur—
The men who win are helped by her.

"Somewhere she waits, strong in belief,
Your soul in her firm white hands;
Thank well the gods when she comes to you—
The Woman Who Understands."

There can be no final defeat to a man who lives gamely in a spirit of determination to make the best of life, to meet every rebuff with a smile, never to live in the past except to get courage out of it, and never facing the future except as an opportunity for achievement. If childhood has gone, then make the most of youth. If youth has passed, seize the high-noon of your life and make it splendid. If

you face the threshhold of old age, you have still an epoch that may be filled with interest and adventure and holy endeavor which will make the evening of your life sweet and beautiful and strong. See Socrates, when his hair was white with the snow of age, learning to play on instruments of music in order that he might add to the world a little charm. See Cato at eighty years of age taking up Greek literature: and Plutarch, after more than four-score years of experience, seriously studying Latin literature with all the enthusiasm of an ambitious boy in High School. See Chaucer, writing the *Canterbury Tales* in his old age. See Gladstone, a charming dinner companion and a most ambitious statesman at eighty-five. See Julia Ward Howe, sought after in the very highest and brightest literary and social circles long after she was eighty. Listen to Paul's bugle notes, catch his gameness of spirit —"Quit you like men," and you need never grow old.

IV. And finally, Paul regards a spirit of love as essential to great strength. He says: "Let all that ye do be done in love."

Robert Browning, in one of his short poems,

with that wonderful spiritual insight which was his supreme gift, writes of the sense of incompleteness in life—of something wanting to give life zest and quicken its energies into rapturous exercise and achievement. He is not writing of troubled lives, or of sinful lives, but of lives that are fine and good and moral, but tasteless; lives that seem to fall short of that which would make them splendid and victorious and joyful. He says:

"Wanting is—what?
Summer redundant,
Blueness abundant,
—Where is the blot?
Beamy the world, yet a blank all the same,
Framework, which waits for a picture to frame."

You catch the idea. It is a summer day full of splendor. The whole heaven is blue. The world is full of light, and the senses are stirred by the beauty of earth and sea and sky. But there is a blot upon it all. There is no life in it. There is a blank as tho it were a frame upon the wall empty of its picture. Then there comes a change. Like a breeze of cool air from off the sea there passes a breath of spiritual passion upon the heart. Love awakes within,

the world becomes full of deepest interest, and life gains the keenest zest.

"Breathe but one breath
And all that was death
Grows life, grows love,
Grows love!"

How often we have seen that in life. Here is a man who has found life stale and dull and is passing on through its course, listless and apathetic, wondering whether life is worth living; then the love passion awakes in his heart. It may be a time of war, when his country appeals to him, and a new sense of patriotism is aroused, love of country possesses him, and he leaps to the front a new man, eager, expectant, daring, transformed by the new love of country that has taken possession of him. Or it may be that God gives him a glimpse of some oppressed people who need to have burdens lifted from their shoulders, some great reform that appeals to his inner soul, quickens his love for mankind, stirs him out of himself, makes him forget himself; then this new enthusiasm for humanity, born of this new love, makes a new strong man of him. Or it may be a great human affection that comes to him. Sud-

denly a divine love for another human being possesses him. He forgets himself. His love puts all his selfishness in the background. The love he holds for his beloved is so much greater than his love for himself or his own life that every power within him is quickened into action. Life takes on fresh charm, and all the world seems new.

The noblest love music of the past century is to be found in Elizabeth Barrett Browning's *Sonnets from the Portugese.* You know her story, no doubt. She had long been an invalid, confined to her couch, and expecting to live only a few years, gradually fading away until death should come as a relief. That was Elizabeth Barrett's outlook on life. Suddenly, as tho he had dropt out of the sky, the marvelously virile personality of Robert Browning, robust, vital, overflowing with strength and laughter, came into her life, and to her overwhelming amazement the whole passion of his great heart went out to her. Her sense of the wonder and mystery and grace of that love, her conception of the sacrifice it seemed to involve, are poured into her sonnets, almost too sacred for the public eye. She records in the

first sonnet the moment when her love was evoked:

" 'Guess now who holds thee?'—'Death', I said. But there,
The silver answer rang—'Not Death, but Love'."

What a splendid illustration that is of the way the divine love through Jesus Christ comes into the hearts of men. A man has been going his own way, living largely a material life, his horizon close about him in his business and political and social affairs, scarcely lifted above the dust and turmoil of each passing day; then suddenly, through some agency divine, the great spiritual truths break in upon his heart. He catches a new vision of himself; he is not merely a cog in the machinery of this world, he is a child of God, a brother of Jesus Christ. Death is not the end of all; he is to live forever. The horizon lifts and stretches away without limit. And these men and women about him—they, too, are immortal. They are his brothers and his sisters. They, too, are the children of his heavenly Father. A divine tenderness and kindness spring up in his heart toward them, and the atmosphere of love transforms him, consumes his selfishness, takes the edge off his

avarice, palsies the hand of greed, and fills his soul, his whole being, with a gracious, loving desire to bless his fellow men.

The strong life lived in this spirit can not fail of happiness. For happiness is never found when you pursue it as the goal. Happiness is a reward for toil done in a noble and loving spirit. David Grayson in his *Adventures in Contentment,* says,

"Happiness must be tricked: She loves to see men at work. She loves sweat, weariness, self-sacrifice. She will be found not in palaces, but lurking in cornfields and factories, or hovering over littered desks: she crowns the unconscious head of the busy child. If you look up suddenly from hard work you will see her, but if you look too long she fades sorrowfully away. . . . Human happiness is the true odor of growth, the sweet exhalation of work, and the seed of human immortality is born secretly within the coarse and mortal husk. So many of us crave the odor without cultivating the early growth from which it proceeds: so many, wasting mortality, expect immortality!"

Do you remember the old abbot of the middle ages who said, "He that is a true monk considers nothing as belonging to himself except his harp"? Ah, that is the spirit in which we ought to live! Go forth singing as we go. Nothing can hold us down or fence us in if we face life in that spirit. All that is glorious

in adventure: all that is splendid in achievement: all that is noble in character, belong to him who goes forth with his face toward the sky, singing as he goes!

THE DURABLE SATISFACTIONS OF LIFE

"But now abideth faith, hope, love, these three; and the greatest of these is love."—1 Cor. 13:13.

PRESIDENT ELIOT, so long the illustrious leader of Harvard, has coined a striking phrase which bids fair for a long career. In describing certain sublime comforts to humanity, he speaks of them as "the durable satisfactions of life." Paul has something of the same idea in mind when instead of "durable," he uses the word "abide" in our text, and names faith, hope and love as at once the three abiding forces as well as the satisfactions of the noblest life possible for men and women to live. The study of Paul's "immortal three," gives us a great theme.

I. First, we have the thought of love. Paul gives the primacy in the Christian program of the noble life to love, doubtless because love is the spirit, the atmosphere, in which such a

life must be lived. God has made us so like himself that we can never do our best work unless we live in the spirit of God, which is love. The human heart is the most sensitive as well as the most exquisite musical instrument ever created; and love alone can keep it in such perfect tune as to make it possible for it to render the full chorus of life. Men and women can do their best only when tuned to full harmony. Just as a skilful musician comes to a wheezy organ or nerve-racking piano and, by his wise touch, brings it into harmony so that it can render with full power the most splendid creation of the masters, so love alone can attune the mind and heart of man so as to make possible his greatest service to the world. German autocracy set its millions of long-trained warriors fighting under the inspiration of hymns of hate, but it did not win; and such a spirit never will. Love, not hate, is the key to the highest efficiency of mankind.

Illustrations of the power of love to quicken human lives into action abound in all the common, every-day life we know so well. Two people come to love each other, and a miracle happens: suddenly they see heaven in each

other's eyes. The very common, ordinary things of life are transfigured to them. The one conscious of being beloved in that inspiring atmosphere finds all his or her powers quickened into music, brought through peace and harmony to better service than ever before. Love is the greatest miracle worker in the world. Every ordinary day love sees dull faces become radiant and heavy hearts grow buoyant. Love sees the ugliness of a mental and spiritual winter, which has held a life locked in uselessness, melt away under his touch into singing beauty and blessing, just as the warmth of spring breaks the grip of the ice on a frozen river and sends its happy waters shouting to the sea. When the melting sun of springtime sends down its call into field and garden and forest, every life germ hears the call and tries to respond. The buried bulb bursts its mummy-like shell. The sap springs from the roots to the finger-tips of the trees with leaves and blossoms. The vine that seemed only yesterday a rope of death responds with its green veil of beauty and its blooming wreath of honor. All nature through harmony is brought into response in a triumphant Hal-

lelujah Chorus to the Creator. So when love comes to the hearts of men and women, the heart melts, the mind awakes, the eye brightens, the cheek catches a glow from heaven, hope beckons to high endeavor, and the world has to reckon with a new, transformed, glorified personality.

It is like that when the great Divine Lover comes to the soul of a redeemed man or woman.

> "Thou shalt know Him, when He comes,
> Not by any din of drums,
> Nor the vantage of His airs;
> Neither by His crown,
> Nor His gown,
> Nor anything He wears;
> He shall only well-known be
> By the holy harmony
> That His coming makes in thee."

Nothing is too hard for love. I lectured one night, years ago, more than a dozen miles out of Boston. The fine old gentleman who presided told me that many years before he had presided in that same hall at a lecture by Wendell Phillips, then at the climax of his great fame as an orator. On that occasion, he said, the night was very rainy and it was a most tedious and wearying drive to a man

already growing old. So my friend said that he tried to persuade Mr. Phillips to remain over night. Mr. Phillips declined. The host insisted: "The night is dark, the storm is driving furiously, it will be midnight or after before you can reach home." But Wendell Phillips answered cheerily, "Yes, that is all true, it is a long, hard ride, but then"—and he threw back his shoulders, and into his eyes came a love-light that glorified his noble face, "Mary Phillips is at the end of the road." That great love made it all easy. Love makes all the burdens light.

Love is also far-sighted, is quick to perceive the presence of the beloved. When the friends of Jesus had fished all night in vain, and at the break of day their Master came walking beside the sea, it was John, preeminently the man of love in that little group, who first discovered that it was Jesus. Love has keen eyes to discern the lover.

When Elisha, the gracious prophet of divine love, was at Dothan, he was surrounded at night by enemies whose general sent a large army to capture the one man. And when his young secretary went out in the morning and

saw the host of enemies, he came back in despair with his bad news. But Elisha smiled and said confidently: "Fear not; for they that are with us are more than they that are with them." And when, in response to the prayer of Elisha, the young man was given spiritual perception, he beheld the whole mountain full of the chariots and horsemen of heaven. God still gives spiritual perception to those who love him. Multitudes of God's trusting souls still find that,

> "Life's rugged mountain side
> Is white with many an angel tent."

Love is the supreme grace because it is the essence of God—if we may so speak of the divine personality. The declaration of John that "God is love," is the most stupendous statement of the New Testament. Because God is love, he is able to love us even when we are unlovable, and that love of God for unlovable men and women is working miracles all around the earth, in every land and among all people. It has answered, with marvelous transformations, the age-old question, "Can the Ethiopian change his skin or the leopard his spots?" The love of God through Jesus Christ

is changing liars into truth-tellers, backbiters and slanderers into helpful saints, thieves into honest men, and fretful naggers into a peaceful blessing to all who know them. You can not tell me anything so glorious about the transforming miracles of divine grace and love that I will not believe it, for I can match it in my own experience and observation of the love of God in the hearts and lives of men and women I have known.

Thank God, there are no hopeless cases to his love. John, whose name is so often on our lips, was a firebrand of hate and ugliness of spirit. When he first became acquainted with Jesus, he asked of him in a moment of personal pique the power to call down fire from heaven to burn up a town with all the men and women and little children in it. But that would-be murderer, through association with Jesus, came through God's love to be the saint of all that group, and to this day is known to the ends of the earth as the apostle of love.

My friends, if you forget everything else I may say to-day, never, I beg of you, forget this: "There are no hopeless cases to the eyes of God's love."

I have just been reading a beautiful book, the latest book by Harold Bell Wright, entitled *The Re-creation of Brian Kent*. In this he tells the story of "Aunty Sue," a lovely old maiden school teacher, a woman whose heart has come, through long fellowship with God, to be as sweet as the heart of Jesus. In Aunty Sue's eyes there were no hopeless cases: a poor thieving wretch of a man, dead drunk and ripe for delirium-tremens, and a dwarfed monstrosity of a mountain girl, who, through lack of discipline, and misuse, and cruelty, and ignorance, was as ugly in her spirit as was her poor, gnarled, twisted body, were cases full of hope and infinite opportunity to Aunty Sue, and under her hand they blossomed into beauty and usefulness. I covet for you every one what I pray God daily for myself, that we may have so much of the divine love in our hearts, and that his love may so come to be the atmosphere and spirit of our lives, that we, too, shall never give up in our effort to redeem and reclaim a crippled or dwarfed or wandering man or woman whom God's dear love sent Jesus to die to save.

II. Then we have the thought of hope.

Hope is the one tonic that can keep the soul of a man or woman nerved up to the fight against all odds on the way to the holiest victories. In many instances we find men and women whose efficiency and useful service are due more to their energy than to their ability. Hope is the supreme source of energy. It is the spiritual "pep," to borrow a college boy's phrase, that puts all our powers into action and keeps life's machinery running at white heat, despite all handicaps. Hope and love are very dependent on each other. They always hunt best in pairs. When the women brought the news of the empty grave in Joseph's garden, on that first Easter morning, Peter and John spontaneously ran a race for the tomb. John outran Peter, for he loved Jesus most, but Peter passed him at the mouth of the sepulchre and went boldly in and searched out every detail, while John timidly hesitated at the threshold. John was love, Peter was hope. You are never whipt until you cease to hope. Hope is the star that is ever beckoning us onward and upward to new and higher conquests.

Do you remember that unique and often misunderstood promise, in the second chapter of

this remarkable book of Revelation? It is a promise made to those who overcome in the Christian life and remain stedfast in loyalty to the right. The promise is: "I will give him the morning star." I imagine some of you may have read that promise and said in your hearts, if not with your lips, "What a strange gift! What value would the morning star be to me? Nothing very practical about a gift like that!" Ah! you are missing one of the most precious gifts of God. The morning star is the star of hope. It foretells the death of the night and the coming of the new day. It tells of the passing of the darkness and of the dawn that is at hand. It reminds you that "weeping may endure for a night, but joy cometh in the morning."

All the great souls who have fought the great sins of the ages, and brought about the reforms that from time to time have set the world forward in the march of progress, have been, above all else "Prisoners of Hope." Such men as Garrison, Wilberforce, Lovejoy, Wendell Phillips, and their compeers fought against desperate odds in their crusade for the overthrow of slavery and the spread of human

liberty. Hope was the morning star that led them through the darkness into the light of freedom.

It was so in the great struggle for a sober nation: such heroic spirits as Neal Dow, John B. Gough, Frances Willard, and hundreds of others who poured out their souls in sacrifice on that sacred altar, were inspired by an immortal hope that beckoned them ever onward, through the darkness, toward the glorious sunrise which we who have come later have rejoiced to see. God grant that we, too, may be true to our morning star!

"Had Moses failed to go, had God
Granted his prayer, there would have been
For him no leadership to win,
No pillared fire, no magic rod,
No wonders in the land of Zin.

"No smiting of the sea, no tears,
Ecstatic shed on Sinai steep,
No Nebo, with a God to keep
His burial; only forty years
Of desert, watching with his sheep."

So many men herd sheep who might herd with angels, because they fail to follow the morning star of hope.

If I speak to any discouraged soul, let me

urge you to follow your star of hope to the end. Charles Kingsley once said, "Be patient with God." Some of you are working on the plastic mind and heart of childhood, others are praying and toiling to fashion into holier form what seems to be the hardening marble of a dearly beloved human heart and soul, which, to your short-sighted vision, appears ever to be impervious to the influence divine. Oh, my friend, your purpose is so holy, the prize you struggle for so great, the work you are trying to do so noble and sublime, that it behooves you to be patient. You must not let hope perish. Great things require long preparation and persistence of toil. God can grow a mushroom in a night, in three weeks he will produce a radish, but for a cottonwood tree he takes twenty years and doubles that when he grows a maple. When he would grow an oak tree, he puts five hundred years on it, and does not deem it waste to outlay five thousand years to produce a giant redwood. But when that strong oak and that vast redwood tower have crumbled back to their native dust, the child, the immortal spirit, for whom you think and plan and toil and pray, will be still in the morning of the eternal youth

of the glorious career God sees before it. So let all of us who strive to bless humanity pray that our star of hope may not grow dim or disappear.

III. Then there is this last thought of faith. The vertebra of a noble life—its stamina and backbone—is faith. Faith in God is the reliable backbone of every great life. This is tremendously important just now in America. Multitudes of our young men are coming home from the great war, having for the first time seriously looked into the face of the gigantic elemental realities. John Oxenham writes of it in his searching little poem—an interrogatory poem about a boy just back from the great upheaval of war:

"What did you see out there, my lad,
That has set that look in your eyes?
You went out a boy, you have come back a man,
With strange new depths underneath your tan;
What was it you saw out there, my lad.
That set such deeps in your eyes?"

And then comes the answer:

"Strange things,—and sad,—and wonderful,—
Things that I scarce can tell,—
I have been in the sweep of the Reaper's scythe
With God,—and Christ,—and hell."

This is the time to test the bedrock of faith and see what it is that produces great men. Many are floundering. If we listen to H. G. Wells and others like him, dangerous because of the beauty of their literary style and brilliant sophistry, we are tempted to believe that the God of the Bible is outworn and outgrown —indeed, has deteriorated into a sort of broken down Samson in his own universe—a poor helpless giant, bound with the green withes of law and fate and force. But I agree with my beloved and eloquent friend, Frederick Shannon, who remarks in a recent discourse of great spiritual insight that the God of the Bible has outlived countless novelists, scientists, theologians, and preachers.

Puny and feeble indeed seem all the men produced by materialism compared with the men of faith in a personal God. There are three famous threes who have made an ineffaceable mark in literature. There are Alexander Dumas' famous musketeers—daring fellows, reckless of human life, and yet with such a breezy dash about them, and with certain qualities which so appeal to the elemental manhood in us, that their fame has kept alive

through the years: and one may easily believe that the story of Athos and Porthos and Aramis will still for centuries quicken the blood of gallant boys in search of adventures.

Then there are Kipling's three famous soldiers—stolid fellows they are; shocking in their profanity, but brave and fearless and manly in many ways. And they too somehow make such an appeal to the deep fundamental things in our human nature as to promise for Mulvaney and Ortheris and Learoyd a long career. But how poor and vulgar these two threes with all their courage and daring appear beside Daniel's dauntless three who faced the great King Nebuchadnezzar and calmly went into the fiery furnace rather than renounce their faith in the one true God. Long after the other two threes are forgotten, the homely named Shadrach, Meshach, and Abed-nego will live in immortal glory. Men will tell to the end of time, and recount through all the ages of eternity, how the form of the Fourth walked with them through the flames that were helpless to harm them.

When you begin to recall faith's heroes, you climb out of the valley with its fog and noisome

vapors into the sunshine and the pure air on the high hills of God. How splendidly Paul calls the roll of the nobility of faith in the eleventh chapter of Hebrews! He tells us of Abel and Enoch and Abraham and Isaac and Jacob and Sarah and Joseph and Moses, of the downfall of Jericho, and the transformation of Rahab, and then bursts forth into one of the most sublime paragraphs in all literature: "And what shall I more say? for the time will fail me if I tell of Gideon, Barak, Samson, Jephtha; of David and Samuel and the prophets: who through faith subdued kingdoms, wrought righteousness, obtained promises, stopt the mouths of lions, quenched the power of fire, escaped the edge of the sword, from weakness were made strong, waxed mighty in war, turned to flight armies of aliens. Women received their dead by resurrection: and others were tortured, not accepting their deliverance; that they might obtain a better resurrection; and others had trial of mockings and scourgings, yea, moreover of bonds and imprisonment: they were stoned, they were sawn asunder, they were tempted, they were slain with the sword; they

went about in sheep-skins, in goat-skins; being destitute, afflicted, ill treated (of whom the world was not worthy)."

Only the faith of the Bible in a personal God has produced a list of heroes like that.

Paul himself is as great an illustration of the noble manhood faith can produce as any of those he placed on his roll of heroes. There is nothing more splendid in any language than that wonderful paragraph which Paul wrote to Timothy as the end of life drew near: "For I am already being offered, and the time of my departure is come. I have fought the good fight, I have finished the course, I have kept the faith: henceforth there is laid up for me the crown of righteousness which the Lord, the righteous judge, shall give to me at that day; and not to me only, but also to all them that have loved his appearing."

Rightly to appreciate those words, you need to stand in the place where they were written. I never shall forget one hot summer morning in Rome when with a party of friends I went down into that old Mamertine prison which was in Paul's time the dungeon underneath the palace of Nero. there Paul, as a prisoner

awaiting execution, wrote those wonderful words. It was a bright day above, and we had gone down out of the sunshine into the darkness, lighted only by a torch and the tapers in our hands. While we stood in that damp, cold place, I shivered a little and thought how Paul in this same letter to Timothy asked that his cloak be sent to him: Paul needed it. In summer we needed wraps, and he was there in winter. Then one of our number read this wonderful paragraph of Paul's dying courage and faith, and the tears ran down our cheeks as we listened and remembered the old hero who at the last of life, waiting for the executioner's block, could bear such glorious testimony to his undying faith in God.

The men of the durable forces and the abiding satisfactions of life must conquer and control the new world in this marvelous epoch on which we are entering. The old order, with Cain's brutal question on its lips, "Am I my brother's keeper?" is forever passing away. The new epoch must have a new slogan, a new leadership of men of faith, hope, and love, whose motto shall be: "Wrong everywhere must die and right everywhere must reign."

THE VALUE OF CHARM IN A CHRISTIAN PERSONALITY

"Whatsoever things are lovely."—Phil. 4:8.

GOD loves beautiful things. There can be no doubt of it: the touch of beauty and grace is on all his universe. Take the things most common—the grass on the hillsides and plains and prairies, just common grass, is the most beautiful garment with which God has clothed the naked world in loveliness. The trees, from the giant redwood, the lofty cedar and pine and fir, the stalwart oak and the graceful elm, to the bewitching white birch, or the flowering laurel and the drooping willow, are all, each in its own way, things of beauty. Even the rocks are sculptured by the far-reaching chisels of sun and frost and rain into sublimity and beauty. The soils are ever attracting our interest by their rainbow coloring—now black, then ashen, then red as the sunset, or nearly golden as the sunrise. Every morning

and every evening is ushered in and ushered out again with a hallelujah chorus of glorious beauty.

Each season has a loveliness all its own. Springtime flushes the whole world with life—flowers spring up even before the trees are awake. In swampy places the first days of warmth set the sunshine to working miracles. In the forests the wild plum and the redbud and the dogwood and the azaleas and the wild currant vie with the bursting buds on the trees for the prize of being first at the beauty show of God.

The beautiful in the trees must compete with the beauty on the ground in meadow and pasture and valley. Up through the green carpet of the grass spring buttercups and daisies and lilies and scores of wild blooms that make a scene of glory in everybody's garden tended by no one but God, the great Gardener. Wild roses bloom along the edge of woods and the brooks and along the road, bordering it with loveliness beyond words to describe. Vines climb over rocks and old snags, covering them with the draperies of heaven.

The hills also and the great mountains, with

their forest-covered slopes, their rugged precipices, their long ice rivers issuing from their snow-clad summits, from beneath which rivers leap full born to go forth on their mission of beauty and service for humanity, are all clothed in sublimity and loveliness. God's own home in the clouds is a canopy of beauty, ever changing from glory unto glory.

The beauty thirst of God is beyond limitation. He has made all animal life beautiful: tigers, lions, leopards, eagles, condors, alligators—even these things that prey upon others for their very life—God has clothed with beauty. The birds are the lovely denizens of wood and vale and sky that are always appealing to our sense of the beautiful.

God loves beauty not only in form and color, but in sounds and harmonies. The very storms sing anthems; the meadow lark's music in the morning sunshine or the nightingale's serenade at night or the robin's matin is as sure testimony of God's love of beauty as the feast of apple bloom or a thicket of wild roses. All these are but samples picked up at random here and there to show that God loves beauty.

God made man to be beautiful, and Paul

assures us that Christian manhood or womanhood should be the most beautiful and attractive personality in all the bright universe of God; that in order to make our Christian lives the most useful to God and to our fellow men, we should gather together into our own natures the most beautiful things to be found anywhere and set them to growing in our minds and hearts and manners, until the charm of our personality will draw the world from sin to our Christ. Paul's idea is that just as some great metropolitan nurseryman or florist brings beautiful shrubs and plants and blooms from the ends of the earth to his garden—the jasmine from the East Indies, the dahlia from the plateaus of Mexico, the tuberose from Java, the fuchsia from Chili, the annuals from California, the carnations and pinks from Italy, the heliotrope from Peru, and orchids from the great roof-gardens among the tree-tops of the dense forests along the Amazon and Roosevelt's River of Doubt in Brazil, so the Christian man or woman who would be at his or her best must gather spiritual beauty from the whole realm of human experience and character and set every root of loveliness and beauty to grow

in the fertile soil of their own souls, until the whole personality is clothed with all possible spiritual charm.

To do this in the most efficient manner we must get it settled in our hearts that charm is important; that taken all in all, the man or the woman who is not only good and true, but good and true in a charming, attractive manner, will be the most pleasing to God and will be able to be a greater blessing to others. Let us study to find some of these sources of charm that will make our lives more influential for good.

I. I would put cheerfulness first. Do you remember that Scripture which says, "The joy of the Lord is your strength?" There is a marvelous power in joy that bubbles over into eyes and voices and faces and muscles and sets a sincere wholesome man or woman all aquiver with the gladness of living.

Epictetus was a poor slave, but he made the world his debtor for centuries. Hear the dear old fellow saying: "I must die, but must I then die sorrowing? I must be put in chains. Must I then also lament? I must go into exile. Can I be prevented from going with cheerfulness and contentment? 'But I will put you in

prison.' Man, what are you saying? You can put my body in prison, but my mind not even Zeus himself can overpower."

How that was proved in the case of John Bunyan! They put his body in prison but his mind and heart consorted with angels and roved in the pastures of the skies, and that wonderful benediction to the world, *Pilgrim's Progress,* was the result. How much humanity owes to the fact that John Bunyan had acquired the charming grace of cheerfulness!

Even ill health may be robbed of its ugliness if we maintain a cheerful spirit. Sidney Smith, ever ready to look on the bright side of things, once, when borne down by suffering, wrote to a friend that he had gout and asthma and seven other maladies, but was "otherwise very well." That spirit will bless every one who comes within its reach.

One writer tells how a while ago he noticed a tree planted at the sunny end of a house, and there the blossoms were large and beautiful, a feast to the eyes. But some of the branches were trained around the corner of the house, where they got much less of the sun, and the difference was marked. The blossoms in the

shadow were starved and sad, and there was little promise of fruit. There was the same root and stem, but the branches in the sunshine were glorious in beauty and blessing, while those in the shadow were pale and dwarfed.

It is like that in our influence for blessing every day of our lives! I remember a line of James Russell Lowell's which goes:

> "It is good
> To lengthen to the last a sunny mood."

Yes, and it is good to hold ourselves to that mood by keeping in the sunshine of faith in the good purpose of God. "God is love"—love all the way through; it is his essence, his very life; and if we breathe that atmosphere and live in that sunshine, we may keep that mood.

II. If we live in the sunshine the next quality will come easy. Our greatest usefulness must come from having about our personality the charm of kindness.

I suppose it is true that nothing in this world can be such a joy-killer as unkindness. At the base it is surely one of the cardinal sins. In the common life of every day in home and business, unkindness probably discourages more

good resolutions, hardens more hearts against the appeal to goodness, and settles sullen gloom and hate as a pall of death on more natures than anything else. Oh, if men and women who really desire to be good and do good in the world could only appreciate what a damnable thing unkindness is in its results!

When I was a boy in Oregon, a Mr. Rarey, a great horse-trainer, came through the Willamette Valley where I lived, giving wonderful exhibitions of his power to tame and control wild horses. This great horse-trainer said something I have never forgotton. He said that he had known a single angry word to raise the pulse of a horse ten beats in a minute. If an angry, unkind word could do that to a horse, think what a blow it must be to a nervous, sensitive child! Children are almost entirely at the mercy of the people around them. God pity the children who have to live in an atmosphere that is unkind and unloving.

Watkinson, the great English preacher, has a great sermon on the text: "This is the law of the house; upon the top of the mountain the whole limit thereof round about shall be most holy." And in illustrating it he declares that

the time is coming when we must seek the more delicate conscience, the conscience that bears witness to the Holy Spirit, and bring it to be judge and to determine all doubtful questions of our relations to one another. All evil things, however cunningly disguised, are to be cast out, and all common things are to be transfigured. And he calls attention to the fact that some of our greatest painters do not bring into their work any of the splendid objects of nature—breadths of golden corn, trees in bloom, bespangled meadows, the pomp of forests, the mountain's purple patch, rainbows, and the wings of butterflies—they simply paint a sand bank, a cutting, a plowed field with a dim peasant or two, and yet their picture is steeped in color and rich in poetry; the perfume of the blossom exhales from the dust, the rainbow is revealed in the clod, and more than the splendor of kings is suggested in the pathos of the peasant. So must we make common things grand with the charm of righteousness; so must we give to all commonplace life the beauty of holiness. God help you and help me, each in our own place and opportunity, to hasten that glorious day of God when men will do bitter

penance for having given their brother an angry look or an unkind word; when men and women will rather wear a leper's rags than wear fine clothing stained with the workingman's blood or the tears of the sweat shop. When all our common life shall be filled with the beauty and the charm of the spirit of Jesus Christ.

Charm is so important that our best and most heroic deeds may fail of blessing and reward through lack of it. Paul advised some people to whom he was writing not to do good in such a manner that their good would be evil spoken of—which is but another way of saying that good must be done in a charming manner to get the best result. And in that oft-quoted paragraph on love in the thirteenth chapter of First Corinthians, Paul assures us that our greatest sacrifices, even martydom itself, may fail of reward unless clothed with the charm of love.

In the great sayings of the twelfth chapter of Romans one of the greatest epigrams of Paul is, "He that doeth mercy with cheerfulness." Even so glorious and God-like a deed as showing mercy may lose its power to bless

unless it is done in a charming manner. How often a gruff, morose manner or voice may rob a good deed of its gracious influence! The world would be a much happier place in which to live if all good men and good women would cultivate a gentle, musical voice and a gracious, kindly manner.

No one should be discouraged by this high ideal. It is within the reach of every one. God can help us to achieve it. One of the most beautiful scenes in all the wonderlands of the American Northwest is Crater Lake in Southern Oregon. Once it was a tremendous volcano belching forth fire and flame and streams of devastating lava which filled all that part of the world with terror. To-day those long slopes of lava are changed into fruitful soil, and great forests are rooted in what was a desolate waste. That once flaming cavern that belched forth fire and poisonous gases, like the mouth of hell, is filled with sweet, pure water, and is one of the beauty spots of God's beautiful world. God did it. He can do that with men and women.

Do you remember the poor demon-possest man of Gadara whom Jesus healed, who ceased

to be a terror and went home at Christ's word and told all the wondering people who had known him the story of his redemption? Christ is still working miracles like that wherever men kneel to pray and open their hearts to the coming of the Son of Man. It is the old, old miracle which Paul speaks of when he says, "Where sin abounds, grace shall much more abound." Christ is the great charm-maker of the world. Let us welcome him to the mastery of our hearts and lives!

A BEAUTIFUL OLD AGE

"They shall bring forth fruit in old age."—Ps. 92:14.

LITERATURE is full of songs and happy sayings about the beauty of childhood and youth. Young manhood and unfolding womanhood have many poets and appreciative writers to voice glory of their beauty and strength. High noon in both men and women has been attractive enough to awaken the lyre of the singer and the oratory of the speaker. But old age has not many songs, save those that are set in a minor key; most of them are sad, tho some of them are full of music. There is nothing in all literature with statelier tread or a finer swing than that solemn and dignified sonnet of the wise man who calls on us to remember the certain passing of youth and strength; the certain failure of all middle-aged glory and vigor. He foretells and depicts, with graphic word-painting, the decay of the earthly house of man's physical pride and glory:

"Remember also thy Creator in the days of thy youth:
Before the evil days come,
And the years draw nigh,
When thou shalt say, I have no pleasure in them;

"Before the sun
And the light,
And the moon,
And the stars
Are darkened,
And the clouds return after the rain;

"In the days when the keepers of the house shall tremble,
And the strong men shall bow themselves,
And the grinders shall cease because they are few,
And those that look out of the windows shall be darkened,
And the doors shall be shut in the street;
When the sound of the grinding is low,
And one shall rise up at the voice of a bird,
And all the daughters of music shall be brought low;

"Yea, they shall be afraid of that which is high,
And terrors shall be in the way;

"And the almond-tree shall blossom,
And the grasshopper shall be a burden,
And desire shall fail;

"Because man goeth to his long home,
And the mourners go about the streets:

"Before the silver cord is loosed,
Or the golden bowl is broken,
Or the pitcher is broken at the fountain,
Or the wheel broken at the cistern,

"And the dust returneth to the earth
As it was,
And the spirit returneth unto God
Who gave it."

No modern writer has reached so lofty a height in portraying the slow crumbling to decay of man's house of life.

But there is a field for thought and discussion concerning the possible beauty and glory of age, not often written about, but which, since its appeal is so universal to all who have reached or passed middle life, seems well worth more frequent consideration.

God certainly has blundered in planning the cycle of man's life unless he has made it possible for the aged man or woman to be beautiful and attractive and to make of the sunset epoch of human experience a time of beauty and blessed usefulness to the world. Since it is unthinkable that the all-wise Creator and Ruler of the universe has blundered, we are forced to believe that not enough attention is given by men and women generally to preparing for what ought to be the sweetest and most beautiful period of our experience in this world. Is it not worth while to consider some of the characteristics of old age that make a man or woman who has reached that portion of the earthly journey peculiarly beautiful and attractive to others of life's voyagers?

I. A courageous old age is always attractive and inspiring. It is very dispiriting to both young and old when a man or woman approaching old age is disposed to drop out of all helpful work and interest of the community of the church or the world, and to take old age, to use a common expression, "lying down." How much more good cheer is breathed from a person who faces age with courage to make the best of his ripened powers.

Do you remember that wonderfully encouraging scene which is portrayed in the book of Joshua? Where Caleb comes to Joshua on his eighty-fifth birthday and asks, not for an easy place, not to be given a territory that has been already conquered, where there are no enemies to overcome, but requesting that he be given the mountain of the giants with its walled cities, which he must batter down before he can enjoy his reward.

I can imagine a venerable weakling in Caleb's place saying something like this: "Now Joshua, you and I were together forty-five years ago when we went with the committee to spy out the promised land. We two are all that are left and you surely ought to stand by

your old comrade and give me an easy berth. Let these young men who have come into the fruits of our dangers and risks and hardships take the hard places; you ought to pick out for me a nice rich valley, somewhere along a quiet river, where all the enemies have been driven out. Joshua, do you remember when we got those wonderfully luscious grapes in the valley of Eschol, where the milk and honey was so abundant and delicious it makes your mouth water yet to talk about it? There's the place for an old man like me. Be a good fellow, Joshua, and give me a safe, rich, happy ranch like that where I may spend my old age."

Now, honestly, have you not known many old people whom you would expect to talk exactly in that strain? But how refreshing it is to turn from a weakling's whine to the glorious courage of a man eighty-five years young. It is Caleb's birthday, and the old man is full of the memories of his long life, and they are all mixed up with Joshua; and so he comes to visit him and to make his plea for an inheritance for himself and family. It was, you will remember, at a time when they were dividing the land. Caleb, the old hero, had a right to

first choice, and every one stood back with eyes and ears open to see what Caleb was going to do. This was Caleb's plea: "Forty years old was I when Moses the servant of the Lord sent me from Kadesh-barnea to espy out the land; and I brought him word again as it was in my heart. Nevertheless my brethren that went up with me made the heart of the people melt; but I wholly followed the Lord my God. And Moses sware on that day, saying, Surely the land whereon thy feet have trodden shall be thine inheritance, and thy children's forever, because thou has wholly followed the Lord my God. And now, behold, the Lord hath kept me alive, as he said, these forty and five years, even since the Lord spake this word unto Moses, while the children of Israel wandered in the wilderness; and now, lo, I am this day four-score and five years old. As yet I am as strong this day as I was in the day that Moses sent me: as my strength was then, even so is my strength now, for war, both to go out, and to come in. Now therefore give me this mountain, whereof the Lord spake in that day; for thou heardest in that day how the Anakim were there, and that the cities were great and

fenced: if so be the Lord will be with me, then I shall be able to drive them out, as the Lord said." God bless the old hero! And give to our own great Republic in this critical age many old men with such spirit!

II. A generous old age, seeking not its own but a blessing for others is always beautiful.

You may see such a beauty in age revealed in Abraham's conduct when the herdsmen of Lot, his nephew, and his own herdsmen quarreled about the pasture land. Then Abraham, in his large, generous way, called a family council and said to Lot, "We are brethren and it will not do for us to quarrel. You choose which way you prefer, east or west, and go in peace, and I will go the other way." Now if Lot had been as good metal as Abraham, he would have declined and insisted on his Uncle Abraham choosing; but Lot must have had some poor qualities in him from some side of his inheritance, and so he cast a greedy eye on the well-watered plains that stretched toward a rich cattle market in Sodom, and pitched his tent that way; while Abraham, with a friendly farewell turned his face toward a desert camp, where he built an altar to God and where

angels again and again came to visit him. Poor Lot would never have lost his wife in a salt heap, nor all his wealth in corner lots in Sodom, if he had cultivated the generosity of Abraham. How beautifully this generosity shines out against the background of that selfish age. No wonder all the desert tribes that knew the story said of the dear old man, "He is the friend of God." Generosity is as beautiful to-day, in this modern world, as it was in Abraham's day.

III. A broadening mental vision, as well as a mellowing heart, is exceedingly attractive in old age. The acquiring of the habit of wide and broadening reading is one of the sweet methods of making the mind of age increasingly catholic in its interest. The reason why the minds of so many old people seem to shrivel up as they grow older is either that their interests are self-centered or that they have failed to cultivate wide and generous interest in or sympathy with the far-reaching needs of human life as a whole. What an illustration Mr. Gladstone was of a man becoming more progressive and broader in his sympathies as he grew older. The old man or woman ceases

to be attractive to youth when there is failure to grasp the hopes and desires and ambitions of the new generation. But if to ripe experience and gathered stores of wisdom age can add hospitality of mind to new ideas and rich sympathy for the aspirations of the new age ever coming on, it has a fascination for young life that surpasses anything possible in one of their own time. Nothing is so fascinating to the young as the wisdom and experience of age when united with a fresh mind, a young heart, and an eager expectancy of spirit for the golden age yet to come. Alas, that it should be so rare! But, thank God, it is possible for every one of us if we will pay the price.

IV. Nothing is more beautiful in old age than a serene spirit—a contented, patient spirit born of a stedfast faith that God means good for the world and may be trusted to make all things work together for good to those who love him. Life is often compared to a river. It is a very interesting and fruitful comparison. See the little stream that issues from a bubbling spring near the top of some mountain, or on some wide-stretching, lofty plateau covered by a vast forest that holds the treasures of rain

and snow. The little stream goes trickling down the way to the plain, gathering other spring rivulets to itself until it is large enough to have a song in its heart. It grows to be a brook, and other brooks unite in its fraternity, and it becomes a rushing mountain torrent. It dashes against the rocks in terraced waterfalls; it splashes in white foaming beauty and throws itself into deep gorges; swings round and round in whirlpools; ever growing in strength, it dashes and plunges on toward the wide-stretching plain, out of sight of the forest and the mountain that gave it birth. Then it gathers still other streams like itself into fellowship. It turns the wheels of industry. It furnishes power and light to illuminate cities and send cars, filled with traveling humanity, like shuttles through the streets and across the land. A hundred miles away from its source it turns lathes and spindles to bless the world. On, ever on, the river pours its ever widening, deepening current until it has left behind much of the rugged grandeur and the dashing, wild beauty of its earlier course; but its usefulness, its power to bless, ever increases. Its floods become great enough to spare huge canals of

life-giving streams to irrigate a broad plateau or a thirsty valley in summer's drouth and turn a sandy desert into a garden of Eden. Still on it flows in its God-planned course. It is broader, deeper than ever. Great steamers plow its bosom in safety. It is a vital artery of commerce. At last it hears the call of the great ocean and sweeps onward to meet the sea. Through its wide and generous mouth the tides of the great deep surge up its course, for a hundred miles, to welcome its fresh and bounteous waters. Vessels of the many nations bring commerce from the ends of the earth through its wide-open doors. A great human life, following the divine plan, is like that. Babyhood is the spring gushing from the hillside; childhood is the gurgling, singing, growing brook; youth is the dashing torrent with the white rapids and leaping waterfalls, exulting in the vigor of life. Manhood and womanhood coming into their own and bending their shoulders to the challenge of the work of the world, are the growing river with its mills and water wheels and electric power plants. And old age is the serene, splendid sweep of the full-grown river, deep and strong and quiet, hear-

ing ever more consciously the call of the sea, and ever more responsive to the sublime fellowship of the great heart of mankind. God grant to every one of us the wisdom to grow and expand into such a fruitful old age.

V. A deepening love, an unselfish desire to bless the world, consideration for the comfort and happiness of those about us, revealing itself in care for personal manners and conduct, and in the cultivation of a gentle and cheerful spirit—these are some of the characteristics of a beautiful old age. Then there is the development of a gladsome sense of humor, in ever seeking to see and make apparent the bright side of every happening of life, and making much of that which is good in other people. There is the cultivation of a habit of appreciation of every kindness received, manifesting itself in expressions of gratitude to God and extending itself in kindly exprest appreciation of every blessing, great or small, offered by any man, woman, or child, from the least to the highest. We ought to be careful not to carry into old age anything that can possibly mar or decrease the happiness of the people who live with us.

Sometimes ambassadors appointed to foreign courts are refused acceptance and are returned to their own land, in bitter humiliation, because they have done or said something that makes them offensive to the country to which they are accredited. So we ought to censor ourselves with great care as we face toward the sunset, and make sure that no habit of speech or conduct, in the smallest detail, is allowed to cling to us to offend the most refined taste of some gentle and lovely soul or to decrease our power to give joy or comfort or blessing.

It has often been said that the devil has no happy old people. The cultivation of the Christian graces alone can give to our characters and conduct that perfect fragrance which will make us beautiful and our presence and companionship delightful and desirable when we are such an one as "Paul the aged."

There are some flowers so beautiful in coloring and so sweet in fragrance that you do not need the skill or taste of the artist to make an attractive bouquet of them. Take a bunch of gorgeous lilies, an armful of glorious roses, a handful of sprays of honeysuckle or a hand's grasp of carnations. You may throw them to-

gether in any careless way and they will gladden the eye and sweeten the atmosphere and bring into the most cheerless room something of the summer-time glory of God's great out of doors. So let the most unattractive man or woman begin honestly to cultivate the spiritual graces which Paul learned of Jesus and recommends to us—love, peace, long-suffering, gentleness, goodness, faith, meekness, and self-control—and let them blossom into smiles and kind words and self-denying and loving actions, and it can not fail to transform the whole personality and produce a charming manhood or a lovely, fascinating womanhood down to the very last hour of life. The weakness and infirmity of age will serve only to bring into relief the attractiveness of these glorious graces which, unlike artificial flowers put on simply to adorn, but like the blooms that grow in the mellow richness of the garden soil, have about them something of the gracious warmth and rich sympathy absorbed from the sunshine and the showers from heaven's own skies. God grant to every one of us an old age redolent with the never-failing graces of the spirit!

Thank God! they are within the reach of

every one of us on the same terms. Gold can not buy them in any market. No powerful position can achieve them. No, it is the open secret of goodness. God can be had for the asking. Prayer is the open channel into the heart of heaven where the charm of goodness is the common atmosphere of living. The secret closet of the humblest home, the sick chamber of the sufferer, the chair of the cripple, the dungeon of a John Bunyan, may have direct communication with the garden of the angels. The poorest and weakest may associate in heart and soul with the holiest personalities of the universe of God and absorb the loveliness of the sweetest of God's saints of all ages. The marvelous miracle of the gospel is good enough to be true. The wicked sinner of our own time may through repentance of sin and by turning with all his heart to God, as did the wicked Saul of Tarsus, lose every vestige of repulsiveness and evil, purify himself through a vision of Christ and the divine hope of the gospel until all the sweetness of heaven shall live in his heart and face and words and conduct, until he fills every room of life he enters with the fragrance and beauty of the skies. When his

day of translation shall come, he will realize the blessed promise of his Lord, that in the great day of revelation he shall see Jesus in all the radiant glory of his supreme loveliness and shall be like him.

God breathe into all our hearts the noble purpose to achieve and realize in our own selves a beautiful old age like that!

THE BIBLE IDEAL OF A NOBLE WOMANHOOD

"The elect lady."—2 John 1:1.

WOMAN'S noblest charter is in the Bible. Thousands of years ago, when women in other lands were only beasts of burden or playthings of man's caprice, in the nation that gave us the old Bible and out of whose midst came the Messiah who ushered in the new Bible, woman was a comrade and a personality, and was free to be a general or a poet or a singer or a ruler, if the divine gifts of brain and character warranted it for her. The book of Job comes to us from so far back in the dusty forgotten centuries that human history can give us no help about its authorship or story. But Job, the most progressive character in all that ancient world, gave his daughters inheritance on an equality with their brethren. And when Joshua was parceling out the inheritances in the promised land to the Hebrews, he gave

to the daughters of Zelophehad land in the same allotment as if they had been men.

Deborah tried to shame Barak into leading the hosts of God's people against Sisera; but when she could not rouse him to action, she girded her own loins with strength and in the confidence of her great faith in God went forth to victory, and afterward sang about it in a song that will last as long as the literature of mankind lives on the earth.

Taken all in all the finest tribute to noble womanhood in ancient literature is that matchless paragraph in the book of Proverbs, ascribed by the translators of our Bible to King Lemuel:

"A worthy woman who can find?
For her price is far above rubies.
The heart of her husband trusteth in her,
And he shall have no lack of gain.
She doeth him good and not evil
All the days of her life.
She seeketh wool and flax,
And worketh willingly with her hands.
She is like the merchant-ships;
She bringeth her bread from afar.
She riseth also while it is yet night,
And giveth food to her household,

And their task to her maidens.
She considereth a field, and buyeth it;
With the fruit of her hands she planteth a vineyard.
She girdeth her loins with strength,
And maketh strong her arms.
She perceiveth that her merchandise is profitable;
Her lamp goeth not out by night.
She layeth her hands to the distaff,
And her hands hold the spindle.
She stretcheth out her hand to the poor;
Yea, she reacheth forth her hands to the needy.
She is not afraid of the snow for her household;
For all her household are clothed with scarlet.
She maketh for herself carpets of tapestry;
Her clothing is fine linen and purple.
Her husband is known in the gates,
When he sitteth among the elders of the land.
She maketh linen garments and selleth them,
And delivereth girdles unto the merchant.
Strength and dignity are her clothing;
And she laugheth at the time to come.
She openeth her mouth with wisdom;
And the law of kindness is on her tongue.
She looketh well to the ways of her household,
And eateth not the bread of idleness.
Her children rise up, and call her blessed;
Her husband also, and he praiseth her, saying:
Many daughters have done worthily,
But thou excellest them all.
Grace is deceitful, and beauty is vain;
But a woman that feareth Jehovah, she shall be praised.
Give her of the fruit of her hands;
And let her works praise her in the gates."

Considering the age in which that paragraph was written, it is the most progressive piece of

literature concerning womanhood that has ever been penned by the hand of man.

This good woman whom John, the apostle of love, has made immortal by his brief letter written in loving and faithful friendship so long ago, was of this high type, beyond doubt a faithful and reliable lover of the truth in Christian living, whose noble character and devotion to righteousness made her a beloved personality to the great-hearted Apostle John, and John says she was one beloved by all those who loved the truth in her time.

Let us study briefly some of the outstanding characteristics of that noble womanhood which fills the Bible ideal.

I. First, she was clothed with strength and dignity. She was no mere butterfly of the fashion plate or the giddy round of social life. She knew how to direct her maids and apportion their tasks, for she herself knew how the work should be done. She was mistress in her own house. Her keen eye saw the needs of her family and her home, and she saw to it that those needs were met. She was forehanded. Her work did not crowd her; she crowded it. She could laugh at the coming of winter, for

the clothing was ready and her linen closet was full. But she was broad-minded, the comrade and equal of her husband. She knew how to judge soils and buy lands and plant vineyards. She knew how to manufacture for the markets and to import, from other lands, what she and her home needed for their comfort. She was the mainstay of her husband. She gave him such comfort and courage and so nerved him up to his work and counseled him so wisely that when he went out in public to take his place in the city council or in the management of the government he was a man to be respected and heeded, and of whom she could be proud. She was his "Woman-who-understands." Happy, indeed, the man with a wife who holds his honor and his equipment for useful manhood in the work of his day as her loyal trust. How splendid is the true dignity of a woman like that! Well did King Lemuel say, "Strength and dignity are her clothing," and well does John call her "the elect lady."

II. She is aggressively good. This strong, dignified, Christian womanhood is immune from many of the ordinary temptations that attack and destroy more feeble per-

sonalities. She fears God. She is full of generous thought for the poor; she holds herself as trustee under God for all the needy her strong, helpful hands can reach. Such a woman is a moral tonic in her home as well as in her church and community. She is so full of the abounding, overflowing vitality of goodness, which she gets from God and her fellowship with his work in the world, that ten thousand temptations and weaknesses dangerous to others fall as did the arrows of the primitive Mexicans when they struck against the Castilian armor worn by Pizarro and his Spanish explorers.

When a great epidemic sweeps the country, just a breath of it seems to overcome the delicate and the weak, while people full of virile life pass through the midst of contagion again and again, armored with such vigor that microbes and germs fall powerless. Sometimes people looking on say of them, "They wear a charmed life"; and it is true, for there is no charm that can protect life so well as having an abundance of life. Jesus said that he came that we might have life and that our life might abound, and there are none so safe from

the ordinary temptations and sins of the world as those who live with wholesome, hearty purpose to bless the world and work together with God to save it.

III. Of course such a womanhood is wise—"She openeth her mouth with wisdom." Wisdom is like everything else; it grows by exercise. An earnest woman, fearing God, loving his service, unselfishly seeking to answer her own prayers for the people in her own home and neighborhood by stretching out her willing faithful hands to bless them, grows wisdom as a rich, well-watered meadow grows grass in the springtime. Wisdom grows by exercise just as muscle does in the body of a vigorous, working youth. Watkinson tells us that there is in nature a mollusk with eleven thousand eyes, and as the shell grows the eyes still multiply. So a good woman, wise with the wisdom of noble purpose and high fellowship with the divine plan of blessing the world about her, becomes full of eyes of inspirations, perceptions, sensibilities, so that she becomes, under God's leading hand, the wisest counselor among her friends.

IV. She is kind. Such a woman could not

be other than kind. "The law of kindness is on her tongue." Whittier tells of one of her number:

> "Sweet promptings unto kindest deeds
> Were in her look;
> We read her face, as one who reads
> A true and holy book."

God, who made woman as a wise afterthought to comfort man's loneliness and strengthen man's weakness, seems to have put into her heart a double portion of that marvelous alchemy of life which we call kindness. How woman's kindness blesses the world! Not only in the person of the white-robed nurse in the hospital, or in the Salvation Army lass frying doughnuts under fire on the edge of the trenches in France and Belgium, or in a Red Cross worker who tears her skirt to pieces to bind up the wounds of a dying youth in a strange land; but in quiet homes where a good woman gladly uses her substance and her love to bless some lonelier younger woman by taking her into her motherly heart and giving to her the background of her broad bosom of love and power.

Above all else on earth every true man

should thank God for true womanhood. For every woman who fails to bless the world there are a thousand who are a benediction from heaven. Charles Mackey truly says:

> "Woman may err, woman may give her mind
> To evil thoughts, and lose her pure estate;
> But for one woman who affronts her kind
> By wicked passions and remorseless hate,
> A thousand make amends in age and youth,
> By heavenly pity, by sweet sympathy,
> By patient kindness, by enduring truth,
> By love, supremest in adversity."

And I thank God that the Bible story makes it sure that the power of God to redeem women and transform sinners into saints is as triumphant as in the case of men. Saul, touched by the voice of Jesus and the power of the Holy Spirit, was transformed into Paul, the great apostle to the Gentiles, but it is not a whit more wonderful than what happened when poor soiled Mary Magdalene was changed into that saintly woman who came to Jesus in the mansion of Simon and bathed the Savior's feet with her tears and wiped them with the golden hair falling from above her own redeemed brow. The perfume with which she anointed

the head of Jesus has filled the world with its fragrance until this hour.

There is an old discouraging line which says that a bird with a broken wing will never fly as high again; but I like better the song which puts it in another light:

"In song, in speech, and in story,
Sounds ever the sad refrain:
The bird with the broken pinion
Soars never so high again!

"And the listening heart grows heavy,
And deeper the lines of care;
For few there be but encounter
And enter the fowler's snare.

"And the 'Surely He shall deliver'
Seems robbed of its joyous strain,
When we hear that the broken pinion
Soars never so high again!

"But hark to the song of triumph:
And gaze on the wondrous flight!
For sure as our strength is weakness,
So surely His strength is might!

"No fear from the flight of the arrow
When He has delivered His own;
The soaring wing was but weaker
When it trusted its strength alone!

"For the bird with the broken pinion,
Or the heart with the scarlet stain,
When borne aloft by His angels,
Sinks never so low again."

Surely I could not more appropriately close this brief but heartfelt tribute to noble Christian womanhood than to call your attention for a single moment to this graphic and richly suggestive comparison made by the writer of the paragraph with which we began our study:

> "She is like the merchant's ships;
> She bringeth her bread from afar."

What a splendid picture! It is the olden day of the sailing vessel. A ship is coming into the harbor with a cargo from afar. She has been in distant ports; she has faced the storms and scudded the gale under bare masts; she has fought her way against head winds and wallowed through days of sickening calm. But she has weathered all seas and has come home laden with rich treasure. She has kept her cargo secure and brought it safely in. As she beats her way in from the open sea, with her white sails gleaming in the sun like the wings of some great white gull, she is a vision to gladden the eye and quicken the imagination and stir the heart. There is the Bible picture of a good woman who, in noble Christian faith

and holy fellowship and Christlike service, having finished her voyage, comes into the harbor of old age with the smile of God in her face and the graces of the Spirit in her mind and heart. Surely she is the noblest exhibit of the power and mercy and goodness of God!

THE LOVE LETTERS OF GOD

"Ye are our letter, written in our heart . . . declared to be the letter of Christ . . . written not with ink, but with the spirit of the living God; not in tables of stone, but in fleshly tables of the heart."—2 Cor. 3:2, 3.

IN the common language of the age in which the New Testament was written, the twenty-four more or less private and personal letters which are bound together in our Bible are called "epistles"; but as that word has gone entirely out of use in our day, I have translated it in this study into the word "letter," which means to us exactly what the word "epistle" meant to the people of the earlier time. These letters form the major portion of the New Testament and are of as much interest to the Christian people of to-day as they were to those who read them in the original manuscripts in the handwriting of their authors.

Fourteen of these letters were written by Paul, running from that long letter we ordi-

narily call the "book of Romans" to the little personal letter Paul wrote from Rome to Philemon when he sent back to him his runaway slave, Onesimus, who had been happily converted to Christianity through conversations with Paul while Paul was a prisoner in Rome. One was written by James, the brother of Jesus; two by Peter, one of the Galilean fishermen among Christ's disciples. Three were written by John, "the disciple whom Jesus loved," who also wrote one of the biographies of Jesus and the book of Revelation. He, next to Paul, was the most voluminous and attractive writer of the New Testament, tho Luke, with his noble biography of Christ and his luminous story of the first years of Christianity in the Acts of the Apostles, makes a splendid third in this wonderful trinity of New Testament authors.

These letters are a rich storehouse of teaching and warning and reproof and encouragement to all who seek to live the Christian life. They are in deed and in truth God's love letters to all who strive to be Christians.

Just as when we are deprest and discouraged and almost crusht under the burden

of loneliness, a love letter full of the warmth of sympathy and tenderness coming to us from the hand and heart of one very dear to us lifts us out of the slough of despondency into joyous courage and rapturous delight; the step no longer lags, and the face glows with a new flush of hope and good cheer; so many a beaten and baffled soul has found in these wonderful letters, written so long ago, a new message of comfort and sympathy that has made them the love letters of God which have quickened the spiritual life anew.

But this is not the theme I wish to bring to your attention at this time. Our text suggests to us a more vitally personal theme for study—that each one of us who attempts to live a life of obedience to God, through fellowship with Christ and trust in him as our Redeemer and Lord, are, ourselves, each one individually, a separate and distinct love letter from God to those who read us in the conduct of our daily lives. The personal character of a Christian man or woman who lives true to God's direction is a love letter from God to those who read it.

I. The Engraving of God. The word char-

acter comes from the old art of engraving. It is taken from the word *charasso*—to engrave. It refers to work done on metal or in stone and in later days on wood. Some of the old works of art took long years of toil to accomplish. Da Vinci worked constantly for four years on "Mona Lisa," and said it was still unfinished. Andrea Cartello is said to have spent twelve years engraving the "Last Supper" on a topaz, which he presented to Pope Leo at his jubilee.

But our text declares that the Holy Spirit is the engraver who inscribes the character of Christ on our hearts when we yield them as tablets to be so used by the Divine Engraver. How it lifts our lives out of the transitory and wind-swept dust of earthliness, and elevates us into the dignity of divine fellowship, to be told that the Holy Spirit, the active, energizing Worker in the Holy Trinity, who created and rules this vast universe, is willing to become the amanuensis who writes on the fleshly tables of our hearts the glorious character of the Christ, so that men, seeing and reading that divine writing in our words and spirit and daily deeds, may find there a love letter from the

God from whom they have wandered and be called back to him.

II. The love letters written in our hearts one by one must always be the chief method and the most efficient method of winning the world to Christ.

The story of David Livingstone in his world-famed work in Africa gives us a vivid illustration. Livingstone went into the heart of Africa to bring Christ to the natives of desert and wilderness, but they had no written or printed language, and the only way he could show them Jesus was in himself. How royally he did it!

Painted savages could not fail to see the face of the loving Christ engraved on the heart of Livingstone by the engraving tool of the Spirit of the living God. And then into the heart of that vast unknown Africa came Henry M. Stanley on his search for the great Christian explorer. Stanley had lived a hard life. He had been hardened in all his best instincts and impulses by an almost incredible experience as a child in an English workhouse of the old cruel, brutal type. Then he had been kicked from pillar to post by the rough heels of fate

until he came to manhood. His native virility of mind had finally come into control, and he had become a keen-brained, unusually efficient newspaper reporter and journalist with a remarkable power of looking into the secret workings of human nature. He was especially acute and expert in reading the motives of men and women. He was an infidel. His hard life had shut the doors of his faith in God and Christ and the possibilities of Christlike character. This was the man who went into the wilderness of a dark continent to find Livingstone. And when he found him, he did not know what to make of him at first. But he tells us that as he lived with him day by day, heard his conversation and saw his conduct toward the natives and toward him, he himself changed. He saw Christ in David Livingstone and that love letter from God was the cause of the conversion of Henry M. Stanley.

Eliot and Duncan, the great missionaries to the Indians, were similar love letters from God to those children of the forest and the plains.

Now God did not let down on Livingstone or Eliot or Duncan the ready-to-wear gift of Christian character any more than he does on

us. Character must be engraved by the Holy Spirit day by day as we hold ourselves patiently and loyally to do the will of God in single and often seemingly unimportant deeds. Look at that most splendid illustration in the Old Bible: two thousand five hundred and twenty-six years ago Daniel was carried away from his home to Babylon. Surrounded by every vice and pleasurable sin to tempt him from his fidelity to the God of his fathers, Daniel vowed not to defile himself; and he proved in that land of godless materialism that nothing can separate a man, young or old, from God, if he simply does right day by day. Every day—not now and then, but every day—Daniel opened his window toward Jerusalem, where his heart was, and prayed to God. He did it as on other days, tho he knew the spies were waiting to take him to the den of lions. He went into the den of lions, but he came out to be a love letter from God to a nation.

III. God can always use a soul on which to print his love letters for the world, if that soul cares more about being right than about making a worldly success. If we follow Christ

and are to be his engravings, we must expect to go to the cross. Daniel had to go to the den of lions, and Christ had to go to his cross. The path of all true greatness of character, of all holy, uplifting influence on the world, is strewn with failures. I like the song of some one who sings:

"I sing the hymn of the conquered, who fell in the battle of life—
The hymn of the wounded, the beaten, who died overwhelmed in the strife.
Not the jubilant song of the victors, for whom the resounding acclaim
Of nations was lifted in chorus, whose brows wore the chaplet of fame—
But the hymn of the low and the humble, the weary, the broken in heart,
Who strove and who failed, acting bravely a silent and desperate part.

* * * * * * *

"While the voice of the world shouts its chorus; its paean for those who have won—
While the trumpet is sounding triumphant, and high to the breeze and the sun
Gay banners are waving, hands clapping, and hurrying feet
Thronging after the laurel-crowned victors—I stand on the field of defeat
In the shadow, 'mongst those who are fallen and wounded, and dying—and there
Chant a requiem low, place my hand on the pain-knotted brows, breathe a prayer,

Hold the hand that is helpless, and whisper:
'They only the victory win
Who have fought the good fight and have vanquished
the demon that tempts us within.
Who have held to their faith unseduced by the prize
that the world holds on high;
Who have dared for a high cause to suffer, resist,
fight—if need be, to die!'

"Speak, History, who are life's victors?
Unroll thy long annals and say—
Are they those whom the world called the victors,
Who won the success of the day?
The martyrs, or Nero? The Spartans who fell at
Thermopylae's tryst,
Or the Persians and Xerxes? His judges or
Socrates, Pilate or Christ?"

Now we must not rob ourselves of the blessing this study ought to bring to us by depreciating our own possible value to God and humanity. The great work of the world must be done by the men with one talent, who each in his own home and by his own fireside does his duty faithfully. The humble, unknown, average Christian home is the bed-rock, the real bulwark and fortress, of the nation's life. It is not the great leaders upon whom a nation or a race must depend—a David, or a Livingstone or an Abraham Lincoln—but the great rank and file of noble, unknown souls of whom

these leaders are but the flowering. There must be a thousand shepherd lads of poetic spirit and the dauntless courage of faith in God to blossom one David. The great hope of the world must ever be in the average man or woman who surrenders himself or herself to life's common duties in a spirit of divine faith and fidelity,—

"The great brave hearts, oh, they beat, beat, beat
'Neath the humble coat in the lowly street!
The great brave hearts are the hearts that sing,
When the winter roars, that they know the spring
Will come back warm with the flush and ray
Of the olden glow of the golden May.

"The great brave hearts are the hearts that feel
For another's care with a sense made real
By their own black hour and their own long night
In the rough turmoil and the uphill fight
That has led them on to the gleam at last,
With the conflict won and the shadows past.

"The great brave hearts are the hearts that go
Through the weeks and years on the round they know
Of patient duty and toil and love,
As they sing with the stars that sing above
And smile with the sun and through the strife
Make sun in the world for a comrade's life."

Yes, there it is, they "make sun in the world for a comrade's life," which is but another way

of saying that they become God's love letter to that comrade.

IV. The very memory of us may become a love letter to those with whom we have lived after we are gone. If the father and mother fill the home, no matter if it is the humblest in the land, with an atmosphere of love and unaffected worship day by day, tho their children go out into a life as hard and trying as Daniel found in Babylon, with all the power of a love letter the memory of that family altar will live in the mind of each boy and girl that grew up in that home of reverence and true religion long after the father and mother have gone to their reward.

How different from the homes nominally Christian only, where children go out into life with no sacred memories to hold them to God! Oh, fathers, mothers, I pray God it may never be asked of any one of you in the great day of assize, "Where is the flock that was given thee, thy beautiful flock? What wilt thou say when he shall punish thee?" It were better to live in a log cabin with true religion than in a mansion with God forgotten. Robert Burns' *Cot-*

ter's Saturday Night has still a message worthwhile to us in the twentiety century:

"Compared with this, how poor Religion's pride,
In all the pomp of method and of art,
When men display to congregations wide,
Devotion's every grace, except the heart!
The Power incensed, the pageant will desert,
The pompous strain, the sacerdotal stole;
But happily, in some cottage far apart,
May hear, well pleased, the language of the soul;
And in His Book of Life the inmates poor enroll."

V. Let us not lose the thought that our salvation, our religion, and our influence on our neighbor are all strictly personal. Do you personally know Christ or have you only heard about him? There is a very great difference. Do you remember those people whom Luke tells us about in the Acts, who lived in Paul's time and undertook to cast out evil spirits in the name of Jesus and said to the evil spirit, "I adjure you by Jesus, whom Paul preacheth" and the evil spirit answered: "Jesus I know, and Paul I know, but who are ye?" Dear friends, let us be sure it is not some one else's Savior, but our own, in whom we believe and trust and live.

If I speak to any one who does not know

Jesus as a personal Redeemer and Friend, I offer him to you in all the earnestness of my soul. He is knocking now at the door of your heart. Open the door with a welcoming hand and he will come in as a guest full of love and blessing. He will not only be your friend, he will become your partner for life. He will enter into your business, your friendships, your joys, your sorrows. He will put his own shoulder by your side under your burden. He will put his neck into the other end of your yoke of duty and the yoke will become easy and the burden will become gloriously light.

There is no other partner or friend like Jesus Christ. He took John and James and Peter from their half-worn fishing nets by a little inland lake, and led them forth to culture and blessing until they joined the ranks of the immortals in filling the world with the unsearchable riches of the love of God. No matter how unworthy or untrustworthy you feel yourself to be, Jesus will never refuse you his partnership, his help, or his friendship on that account. He "came to seek and to save that which was lost." "He came not to call the righteous, but sinners, to repentance." Give

him your heart and let him lead you, and ere long you will find yourself singing:

"I have a Friend so precious, so very dear to me;
He loves me with such tender love, He loves so faithfully,
I could not live apart from Him, I love to feel Him nigh;
And so we walk together, *my Lord and I.*

"I tell Him all my sorrows, I tell Him all my joys;
I tell Him all that pleases me, I tell Him what annoys.
He tells me what I ought to do, He tells me how to try;
And so we walk together, *my Lord and I.*"

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